District of Innovation Application

October 31, 2013

Applicant Information

District Name: **Owsley County**   **Owsley County/475**

District Name   *County/District #*

Address: **14 Old KY 11**

Street Address

Booneville   **KY**   **41314**

City   *State*   *ZIP Code*

Phone: **(606)593-6363**   Date of Application: **October 31, 2013**

Contact Person/Title: **Paul Green DPP/Chief Academic Officer**

DISTRICT ASSURANCES

- Applicant assures that its application does not contain any request to waive the following Kentucky Revised Statutes or Kentucky Administrative Regulations:
    a. Any statute or regulation related to health, safety, civil rights, or disability rights;
    b. Compulsory attendance requirements under KRS 158.030 and 158.100;
    c. The Kentucky Core Academic Standards outlined in KRS 158.685 and 704 KAR 3:303;
    d. The minimum high school graduation requirements unless allowable under 704 KAR 3:305;
    e. Compliance with requirements of the statewide assessment system as specified in KRS 158.6453;
    f. Criminal background check requirements;
    g. Open records and meetings requirements;
    h. Purchasing requirements and limitations; or
    i. Any plan to reduce the instructional time provided to students below the requirements outlined in KRS 158.070, except requests to implement competency-based strategies that measure a student's mastery on the curriculum standards, regardless of the amount of instructional time completed.

- District assures that any school listed as participating in the district's application did so voluntarily and attached to this application is a copy of the official minutes of the SBDM Council Meeting for each participating school showing at least 70% of the eligible employees, as defined in KRS 160.107, voted in the affirmative to participate in the plan.
- District assures that it will comply with any reporting requirements of the Kentucky Department of Education, which at a minimum will include an annual reporting requirement that includes the following data points:
- Number of students served by the innovation plan, total number and by:
    - Elementary School
    - Middle School
    - High School
- Number of at-risk students (*with particular emphasis on graduation from high school*) total number and by:
    - Socio-economic status
    - Race/ethnicity
    - Gender
    - Disability
    - Grade level
- Total number of certified teachers participating in the innovation plan and roles/responsibilities
- Documentation of certified and classified staff operating in a non-traditional setting
- Documentation of any extended learning opportunities in which students participate for the purposes of earning or recovering credit, including:
    - Qualification of instructors
    - Time spent
    - Student outcomes (completion rates)
- Documentation of other measurable outcomes, described in the initial application or through modification of the original plan
- District assures that it has obtained broad support for this application as evidenced by letters of support attached to this application from key stakeholder groups.

Owsley County's Innovative School
A "Student-Centric" Approach
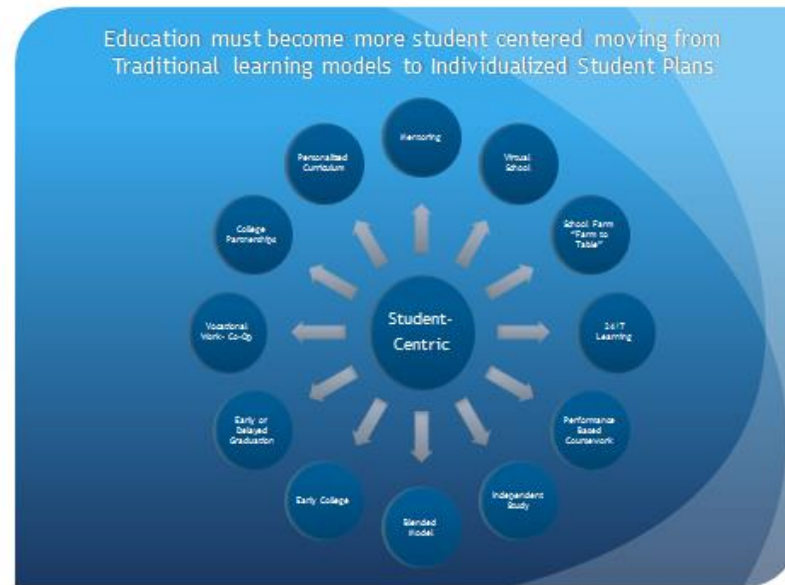
What is Learning Innovation?

KRS 156.108 (Kentucky's new Districts of Innovation statute) defines "innovation" as **"a new or creative alternative to existing instructional and administrative practices intended to improve student learning and student performance of all students".** To be more specific, "learning innovation" is about moving from the teaching system of the 20th century to a new "learning system" of the 21st century where learning and the "facilitation of learning" (teaching) are the central elements. Learning innovation is not about modifying the existing teaching system, rather it is about creating a new system that includes the following:

- involving students and teachers in significantly different ways that lead to increased student learning and engagement
- defining new outcomes for learning and designing new ways of measuring students' progress and mastery
- creating new ways of facilitating learning and designing different structures for deploying adults in schools
- moving from a "one-size-fits-all" instructional program to personalized learning
  focusing on the 21st-century skills of collaboration, teamwork, problem-formulation, creativity and the ability to "learn how to learn"
- creating systems where students are partners in designing and owning their learning
- ensuring that a student can learn anywhere he/she can access the instructional material and at any time 24 hours a day/7 days a week and 365 days a year
- creating a system of support for each student to be successful in this environment

What is learning innovation?. Retrieved from http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Pages/What-is-Learning-Innovation.aspx (October 22, 2013)

Introduction

Owsley County is a beautiful picturesque county with rolling hills, flowing rivers and streams that sit in the foothills of Eastern Kentucky and the Daniel Boone National Forest. The county seat of Owsley County is Booneville (named after Daniel Boone). Owsley County is also a community steeped in tradition and pride. Although it is extremely magnificent in beauty, in 2012, Owsley County was ranked as poorest county in the state of Kentucky and one of the poorest counties in the nation. Owsley County, with a population of 4,755 people in the 2010 census, has 39.3% of the population below poverty level. 57% are below poverty level in the category of 18 years of age or younger (Kentucky KIDS COUNT 2012). The average median family income in Owsley County for the years 2007-2012 was $19,344.00 with the state average being $42,248.00. These low socio-economic factors significantly impact the students of the Owsley County School District.

School District Information

The Owsley County School District is the only school district in Owsley County with a student population of 961 students in grades pre-k through grade 12. Our free and reduced lunch percentage is 91%.

Below is a chart showing our 2013 Assessment Data for Owsley County School District, specifically Owsley County High School. While we have made steady gains, we still fall behind the state average in every area. We feel that the ability to implement our innovative plan, with the assistance as a District of Innovation designation, would allow us to meet and surpass state average scores by individualizing student curriculum.

Owsley County High School Assessment Data – 2013	District Score	State Score
ACT	18.1	19.2
% Meeting English Benchmark	51.9	53.1
% Meeting Math Benchmark	34.6	39.6
% Meeting Reading Benchmark	32.7	44.2
KPREP	52.2	57.3
CCR	49.3	60.7

Evolution of our Model

During the 2010-11 school year, the Owsley County School district took part in a pilot initiative with the Kentucky Department of Education.   The pilot evolved from the idea that learning could continue for students at home during periods of time due to inclement weather. During the years 2008-2010, Owsley County Schools cancelled classes an average of 27 days per year due to snow. This continued disruption of education made it difficult for teachers to provide a continuous flow of instruction during the winter months. The pilot program, referred to as the snow-bound pilot, would allow teachers to create activities for students to complete at home during inclement weather.   The program was web-based, but was supported with paper and pencil versions for students without access to the internet at home. The program was a great success, and developed into the idea that if teaching and learning can take place at home during days of inclement weather, then why can't it take place on a regular basis? This was the beginning of the creation of Owsley County School's District of Innovation Model.

District of Innovation

Owsley County School's District of Innovation plan is being developed around the tenets of personalizing educational plans for all students. Every student in grades 7-12 would work with staff mentors to develop a personalized education plan (**PEP**). Each plan would be developed by assessing the needs, wants and specific barriers of each student. A student's curriculum and pedagogies would be developed to address each individualized plan. The plans would breakdown traditional educational methodologies and would promote the growth of students utilizing innovative approaches. The pathways developed would mimic the post-secondary model.

Students entering secondary school, working with advisors, plan their best "route" to graduation. Students select their area of emphasis, their course structure and also the preferred method of receiving instruction. Many students in post-secondary fields select to take a completely on-line curriculum; others a more traditional method.   These students can select a variety of fields, including advanced degree paths or pathways that result in an industry certification.   Course work for each field is usually specific to the skills needed to perform those tasks. For example, students on an engineer track must take advance math courses, while those in medical fields would take advanced science coursework, however, a student interested in an automotive repair certification may only be required to take a general math (or no math at all).

 Owsley's Innovative Model will develop personalized education plans (PEP) for each student. The plans will be specific and meet the individual needs of each student. Personalized education plans may consist of virtual school, independent study, dual credit and/or online college courses, Career Coop, Job Shadowing, Career Mentoring, etc. In order for us to maximize the potential of each student we MUST move away from the one-size fits all approach. We must challenge the tenets of the traditional educational norms including; 8am-3pm school, an August to May school year, and a common curriculum that EVERY student is supposed to master. Instead, we must develop an educational model that meets the specific needs of each student, breaking down these barriers and challenging traditional curriculum and pedagogical approaches. Our plan uses a student's

strength to build a plan that will help them be successful in life. It may mean that the student be placed in an accelerated track going far beyond the requirements of the common core, but it also means that we may have to waive certain requirements (Algebra 2 or Eng. 4) for more practical course work that meets the needs of a student with more academic challenges.

Owsley County is committed to its students and ensures that each student will receive a rigorous education that prepares them for life as a productive citizen.   This may mean a schedule that is loaded with accelerated or dual-credit courses. It also means that a rigorous education with a vocational focus, with an emphasis being placed on job and real life skills may be more appropriate for some students. In this model a student may not need an algebra 2 or biology class; rather they may need a math class more focused on business and financial principles, or a physical science course.   The school continues to strive to find ways to educate students by any necessary means, breaking down barriers, and providing the students their best opportunities for a successful life.

Plan in Action

Owsley County's innovative approach will begin with skill development at Owsley County Elementary School.   As early as Kindergarten, students will develop 21st century skills, including the usage of Blackboard, career education and exploration, and other innovative technological approaches.   These skills will prepare them for non-traditional approaches to learning.   Beginning in 6th grade students will utilize the ILP as a first step in developing their personalized education plan (PEP).   Once a student enters OCHS, one can look at the three types of learning environments that were created for specific students. One model is for the traditional student. This is a student who works well in the traditional agrarian/industrial model. The student attends school each day from 8:00 AM -3 PM and is enrolled in seven classes.   The classes may be chosen to meet the specific needs of an individual student, but can otherwise vary little from the traditional educational platform. Model two is an online model in which students may be enrolled in a completely virtual school setting. The student's course-work is designed to meet their individual needs. Finally, a hybrid model that includes both elements of the traditional model and that of the virtual model. In this model, students attend school for a portion of the day. During that time, they take traditional courses. The rest of the day the student may be enrolled in online courses, project based learning courses, at-work co-ops, or competency based courses. These students may attend class on the school campus only the time enrolled in courses at school. The rest of the time they may complete course work off-site.

Traditional Model. The vast majority of students still fall into this category. An example of this is a sophomore at OCHS. The student is a high functioning student and has already met all ACT benchmarks.   The student is very interested in computers and technology. After meeting with a mentor, the students schedule was planned as follows:

1st Period… Biology 1 (End of Course assessment administered)

2nd Period… Alg. 2 (End of Course assessment administered)

3rd Period… Math Lab (Hawkes College Algebra)

4th Period… English 2 (End of Course assessment administered)

5th Period… Hybrid Course. Student is completing IC3 certification (competency credit). Also, student is enrolled in Introduction to Python programming offered through coursera.com.

6th Period… Band

7th Period… US History/History 108/109 Dual Credit course offered through a partnership with HCTC (End of Course assessment administered)

While the students schedule is a traditional seven period approach, the schedule has been modified to meet the specific needs of the student. It includes a performance based course, a MOOC course (Python programming), an independent study (Hawkes College Alg) and a dual credit course. Several students are currently enrolled with modified schedules to meet their needs, including students on college readiness pathways, but also those on career readiness paths.

Virtual Model. Currently 14 students in the Owsley County School District are enrolled in a completely virtual format. These students range from students taking complete online college course loads to students taking all career pathway courses. One student is a senior in high school who was offered a job with Elliot construction.   The student has not met college readiness benchmarks, but is close to completing a career pathway. The student has been enrolled in the KY3CR online learning program. The program is designed to assist students in reaching college/career readiness benchmarks.   The student's schedule is performance based requiring them to complete tasks assigned within a certain amount of time. The goal is for the student to complete the program and be prepared to meet WorkKeys benchmarks and KOSSA certifications by the end of the first semester. The student will be awarded core requirement credits in reading and math upon successful completion. The student's other credits will be awarded based on work experiences. This student, who was prepared to drop out of school, is now on track to graduate in May.

Hybrid approach. This is a popular approach among our driving student population. Many of our students are well on track to graduate and complete a college or career pathway. We encourage students that are on pace for completion to look at expanding their experiences through our dual-credit program, online classes, work co-ops or competency based credit courses. An example of this is a junior student who is enrolled in Algebra II, English III and Spanish during the morning. In the afternoon, the student leaves campus, but is enrolled in two online college courses and is working part-time. We are able to award three performance-based credits for the courses taken off campus.

These examples highlight ways we are currently using innovative approaches to meet the needs of students, however, this is just the tip of

the iceberg in the approaches needed to truly impact all students of Owsley County Schools. We are requesting, through this application, permission from the Kentucky Department of Education to exponentially expand our approaches in meeting the needs of students and breaking down all barriers to learning.   We hope to expand our innovative approach each year until all students are being served. We are requesting numerous waivers and assistance from KDE to help us on our journey. Owsley County is small rural county that does not have access to many opportunities and services offered in larger districts. The school is also aware that the limited exposure and opportunities provided to our students is a tremendous issue. We hope through this status, and the assistance of KDE, Owsley County can become a model for the state, and possibly even the nation.

Component 1
District of Innovation Rationale/Needs Assessment

1A. Plan *precisely* and *accurately* identifies goals and performance targets to advance the vision and mission

Goals and Targets to Advance the Vision and Mission: The mission of Owsley County Schools is that the district "is to create an innovative learning environment that breaks down all barriers to student learning and prepares ALL students for college, career and the 21st Century World." To accomplish that mission, the district envisions its students achieving at the highest levels, by relying on new these new technologies, new school structures, differentiated curriculum, and advanced pedagogy. The new system is intended to remove current barriers and provide unique pathways for students to excel.

The following are the goals and performance targets of Owsley County Innovative Model
1. Reduce all barriers by breaking them down to insure student success
2. Graduate 100% of students from OCHS
3. Increase percentage of students graduating from OCHS college/career ready from 50% to 90% by 2018.
4. Expose students of Owsley County to futures that many never thought possible.
5. Give students the same opportunities to vocational, college preparatory and elective offerings as students in the largest urban school districts.
6. Create an Owsley County satellite college. Students from Owsley County can attend in high school through age 21. Owsley will become a PreK-14 campus.
7. Through partnerships with Universities, Owsley County wants to offer the students the ability to earn a minimum of 60 hours of college credit at no charge. We hope to provide a full four-year degree with no expense to the students of OCHS.
8. Break down traditional educational molds that were developed in the 1800's. August-May and 8-3:30 must be replaced by 24/7 365.
9. Implement new motto for all "We will find a way"
10. Increase the number of students who have a <u>Personalized Education Plan</u> from 50 in year 1, 100 in year 2, 200 in year 3, and ALL students at Owsley County High School in year 4 of the District of Innovation Plan Timeline.
11. Implement Career Readiness and through local business partners, create mentoring and job shadowing opportunities for all students.

Central to the vision is making use of the existing community assets to further the district's educational goals. These assets include:
- A nearly county-wide Fiber-to-Home effort in partnership with the local telephone cooperative (PRTC) that provides internet access to

students and opens technology to them as a tool for learning, research and demonstrating learning.

- o Partnerships with neighboring districts to provide distance learning opportunities for courses not available in a school the size of Owsley County HS, so that students can complete courses that will prepare them for college. --Several other districts have expressed interest in joining our course sharing partnership. We hope to expand course offerings through these partnerships in the future.
- o Through the Promise Neighborhood federal grant project of which Owsley is a participant, development of core content courses to be delivered via Blackboard for the 2013-14 school year with the goal of having a complete curriculum available online by 2015-16.
- o Local colleges and universities, and an Area Health Education Center that can offer advanced study, field work and internships in future careers related to STEM and health fields as well as business entrepreneurship and the literary arts, ensuring that students graduate college and career ready.
- o An agriculture economy and Farm to Table initiative that open new possibilities for careers related to sustainable environments and innovations in farming.
- o Utilizing Community Partners such as the Owsley County Action Team, Owsley County Public Library, Owsley County Extension Office, and the Owsley County Arts Council for technology access, mentoring, etc.

It is the intent of this application and the ensuing implementation to focus on the assets of the community and at the same time, contribute to developing these and other assets through the education of our future work force. Owsley County currently has limited job opportunities for its citizens as there is no industry, active coal mines or tobacco production, and thus a small tax base which has a direct impact on funding for both the school district and community infrastructure. It is incumbent upon the school system to prepare students for careers that can grow the economy and the community. Additionally, the district aims to provide both incentive and hope for students that their efforts in high school can pay off for them individually in postsecondary education and career and at the same time revitalize Owsley County.

1B. The vision and mission *superbly* demonstrates a guide/support for innovation in student learning

Vision, Mission and Improving Student Learning: The entire premise of Owsley County's District of Innovation plan is to develop student centered learning. The first piece to this plan is to develop a comprehensive mentoring/advisement program for every student in grades 7-12. Students at OCES will also begin to develop skills and have increased exposure to opportunities outside of their normal world. This exposure will open doors and start the process of removing boundaries to success in the 21st century world.

The mission of the District stated in the section above is to create an innovative learning environment that breaks down all barriers to student learning and prepares ALL students for college, career and the 21st Century World. The vision of the District is to move from an industrial model of education to one characteristic of the information age, where students can use technology and 21st century pedagogy to learn both broadly and

deeply, and in doing so are prepared for college and career. The District envisions creating several new structures for learning that provide options for student engagement, address students' long-term goals, and equip students with 21st century skills. As noted above, achievement lags behind the state, the district has difficulty keeping students engaged in high school and also in ensuring they are prepared for college. Innovation status will allow the district to re-imagine the way it provides schooling and remove barriers in the way of an individualized, personalized plan of learning for each student.   By individualizing each students learning, each student's specific needs can be addressed.   For many students in Owsley County, the biggest need is exposure and opportunities to curriculum and training that has not typically been a part of Owsley County school curriculum. The new innovative approach will allow us to break down traditional educational norms.

1C. The plan *thoroughly* and *effectively* demonstrates a process that has identified gaps between expectations for student learning and student performance

Through Personalized Education Plans (PEP), each student will look at their own expectations for learning and examine the pathway they work toward in the future. Students will analyze their own performance data; looking at strengths and areas that need improvement.   Through this process, Owsley students will see gaps between what they want to accomplish, and how these gaps relate to their actual performance.   Student analysis will help determine specific areas the students need to grow in order to meet their educational goals.

Owsley County is taking seriously the District of Innovation's charge to personalize learning for students and to move away from the industrial model of education to what is referred to in professional literature as Learning 2.0 (Kerchner, 2012) and by the KDE as next generation learning. This means looking at new structures, pedagogy and resources that will motivate students to achieve in school and at the same time prepare them for college and career. In doing so, Owsley staff is keenly aware of the barriers facing students in this small, rural district in Eastern Kentucky, the poorest in the state and one of the poorest in the nation. Lack of economic and career opportunity over generations has diminished students' aspirations for college and career, and eroded their motivation to remain and excel in school. Moreover, Owsley County is isolated, leading to many students being unaware of opportunities in the larger world beyond their rural community. The district is committed to addressing these barriers and broadening horizons for students so they have a larger sense of what is possible for them. Many students in our community have never been exposed to anything outside of Owsley County. Often when students are taken on field trips, we find that many of our students have never been to McDonald's and do not know how to place an order.   When we focus on gaps, we must first look at the community in which our students live. Owsley County has no fast food restaurants, no stop lights and no department stores.   In order for us to get students prepared for college or careers, we must first provide them opportunities to experience what is outside the borders of Owsley County.

High school teachers estimate that 63% of their graduating seniors will be adequately prepared for college-level coursework without the need for remediation and that 51% will graduate from college (MetLife, 2011). Data shows that only 25% of high school graduates who took the ACT test were ready for college-level work (ACT 2012).

According to Tom Vander Ark, CEO of Getting Smart and former Executive Director of Education for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, about two-thirds of American students leave high school unprepared for college or a career and with the rising expectations and increasing number of students living in poverty, America K-12 education is faced with greater challenges than ever before (The Future of Learning: Personalized, Adaptive, and Competency-Based, 2013)

1D. *Explicitly* explains how innovation status will ensure a greater level of success for student learning

In order to break down all barriers to learning, Owsley County schools must be given relief from KRS regulations that promote a one-size fits all approach. Regulations that involve curriculum and pedagogical requirements must be waived or modified to give the district flexibility to develop plans that meet individual student needs. Graduation requirements need to be modified in order to allow students flexibility to develop skills they need. Students that can meet college or career readiness standards should be consider graduation ready, and not forced to take coursework that does not meet their needs. Also, while Owsley County is not requesting additional funding, we do ask that funding structures are modified to meet the needs of the 21st century learner. In order to meet the needs of each student, the district must be able to provide transportation to Vo/tech centers and college campuses. Also, students in a virtual environment are not allowed to receive funding for transportation for food service. However, the additional costs of infrastructures, internet access, software, and teacher development make it critical that these funding sources not be lost. We must also look at the needs of students that need additional time. Year-round schooling, including opportunities for students in the summer months for college courses, vocational courses, and co-ops are needed. Attendance regulations are antiquated and still promote the six-hour/177 day approach. In order to move forward with our innovative plan, we need relief from these laws.

If Owsley County is granted innovative status, working with KDE, Owsley County will be able to develop a "Student-Centric" model that meets the needs of STUDENTS, not initiatives passed at the state or federal level. Owsley County assures that each plan will be rigorous and will ensure a much higher level of success for student learning. An example might be a student that is identified as MMD. The student is in high school, but still struggles with basic math skills. The student has a very high interest in automotive, and while he struggles greatly with core curriculum, he thrives in the vocational school environment. The state of Kentucky requires this student to take Algebra 2 and Biology. Neither of these courses develop skills necessary for this student to develop or prepare him for his future. If this student was allowed to take coursework that related directly his area of interest and strength he could thrive, however, he is forced to take coursework which does not meet his needs or interests. The student becomes very disinterested in school, and is an extreme drop-out risk. We must move away from this model!

1E. High level of participation and engagement from all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, professional organizations, community,

Community Participation: Owsley County is a small rural community.   One of the largest advantages that the school system has is the ability to have personal relationships with all community stakeholders.   Owsley County School System is the largest employer in the county, thus is the pillar of the community.   Most community activities revolve around the schools in some capacity. The innovative model currently being utilized has complete support from the community and the following is a list of community partners that have committed support through mentoring, space, computer use, etc.:

- Owsley County Public Library
- Owsley County Action Team
- Owsley County Drug Awareness Council
- Owsley County Cooperative Extension Office
- Owsley County Adult Education
- Owsley County FRYSC
- Kentucky River Community Care
- Owsley County Historical Society
- Owsley County Arts Council
- Peoples Rural Telephone Cooperative

1F. Effectively identifies and justifies need for waivers

F. *Overcoming Barriers via Waivers:* The students of Owsley County have significant barriers to learning. These barriers are well documented throughout the application. Many of these barriers are related to rules and regulations that promote antiquated educational pedagogies and curriculum. Owsley County Schools hopes to remove all barriers to student success, including those put on districts by state and federal regulations. We must change the status quo if we are going to impact individual students.

District of Innovation Status can help to jump start this change by allowing the district flexibility to meet student needs. Owsley County School District is requesting several waivers. In making these requests, it is understood that many of the regulations involving schools may be waived without innovation status. In order to maintain clarity, Owsley County is requesting these waivers to ensure that these regulations do not create barriers that inhibit the meeting of each student's individual needs. The requests are as follows:

#1 KRS 156.160 Section 1 -- Owsley County is requesting a waiver from the required state graduation requirements. Also, the district is requesting that the mandated course schedule (I.E. math each year) be waived. Each student at OCHS will be given an educational plan. Each plan will be designed to meet the specific college and career readiness needs. Student's courses and schedules will be based on individual needs. The district understands that Section 2 of the legislation gives flexibility in scheduling and substitution of credits, however, the district would like to be able to work with Kentucky Department of Education to ensure that each plan meets state requirements, addresses standards but also are tailored to specific needs of students.

#2 Waive 4 year cohort graduation requirement. This is a two-fold request. First, in order to truly individualize student learning, some students may need more than 4 years to complete required coursework.   If we are going to meet the needs of all students, time cannot hold schools hostage. Secondly, part of our request is to expand our dual credit program through post-secondary partnerships. Because of this, we would ask that we be allowed to count students as high schools graduates upon meeting college or career-readiness measures. Students would then have the option of returning to HS to enroll in dual credit or vocational courses beyond their senior year. These grades would be considered grades 13-14.

#3 "Blurring the Lines of K-12" Once a student has met college or career readiness benchmarks, we ask that a graduation code be given that would identify the student as having met all high school requirements, but would allow the student to remain enrolled in high school. The student may meet this at any time before the end of their senior year. The student will be allowed to remain in school, but will be considered a high school graduate.   If a student has completed all high school requirements, the student could potentially be eligible for financial aid, KEES money and scholarships.   This would allow students to enroll in a complete dual-model, a model in which the student is a full-time college/vocational student, but would remain enrolled as a high school student. The student could take courses via online or through our expanded satellite campus program. The student would receive support from high school faculty to ensure their success in the post-secondary world. (See Dual Credit model pg.18)

#4 Waive EOC testing requirements for students that have met College/Career Readiness Benchmarks. In order to truly individualize instruction and meet specific needs of students, one must not only consider pedagogical needs, but curriculum needs as well.   In order for students to have a truly personalized educational plan, courses such as biology and alg. 2 may need to be replaced with courses such as physical sciences and business math.   Students that have met college or career ready paths may defer taking EOC assessment until their senior year. If they have met college or career Readiness benchmarks, then they would not need to take or enroll in these courses.

#5 702 KAR 7:125 Section 1 – Owsley County is requesting a waiver of Pupil Attendance requirements. As in request one, Owsley County understands that flexibility for pupil attendance is given in section 1(g) and 1(h). However, we are requesting waiver to ensure students may be allowed to enroll in as many performance based courses as needed. The language in Section 1 (g) states "a student **MAY** be counted in attendance

for performance-based credit for **a** class or block for the year or semester…" We would like to flexibility in counting students present that are enrolled in any number of performance-based courses. We also would like to extend this waiver to any student that is successfully meeting requirements as outlined in their personalized education plan.   – This request also is important as we explore the possibility of expanding our virtual and blended learning approaches. We are considering adding a virtual period in which all students would participate in virtual learning each day. This waiver would assist in shortening the school day to compensate for all students being enrolled in at least on online course.

#6 KOSSA/Industry certification requirements—In order for a student to be considered career-ready, the student must have two indicators. First they must have met minimum proficiency scores on the ACT WorkKeys or ASVAB. Then they must meet an industry certification requirement. Owsley County is asking a waiver for the course requirement for industry certification. If a student is enrolled in one class related to an industry certification and attains the skills needed to pass an industry certification test they should be counted as career ready. Students should not be forced to take additional coursework if they already have skills.

#7 Teacher certification requirements—As previously stated, Owsley County HS is a small school, complicating hiring of staff and offering of a wide range of courses to individualize learning. The district would like several options for bringing professional expertise to the high school and for ensuring that students can graduate with a major that sets them on the path for college and career. These options could include pairing certified teachers with community, non-certified professionals in the health, agriculture and business fields for example, and having flexibility of roles as teachers and community professionals plan and work together to deepen and expand learning for students; community and postsecondary internships where students are not working directly with teachers but are earning work/study credit; or other arrangements. The district will work with the KDE to determine if waivers are needed in this area.

#8 We ask the department to honor KRS 158.146 by allowing the district to utilize a substitution funding to support virtual/performance/innovative initiatives. The cost of virtual school development and infrastructures create an extra expense to students and our district. Because of this, districts that provide instruction at home through a virtual environment should not lose critical funding for using these innovative approaches. Each day a student is enrolled in virtual or performance base courses, we request that we receive substitution funding to offset money lost for transportation and food service. Also, Owsley County Schools participate in virtual learning days in which school occurs at home. Again, during these days the district loses valuable funding.   We ask that a special code be created (C1), which would be utilized for students that are enrolled in virtual courses and for all students during virtual days. C1 funding would be the equivalent of lost transportation and food service funding. These funds would be used by the district to improve infrastructures and to provide internet access to students at home. These funds should not be considered additional revenue, but are a substitution for lost transportation and food service money.

KRS 158.146 Establishment of strategy to address school dropout problem -- Department to provide technical assistance, award grants, and disseminate information to school districts and school level personnel.

(a) Analyses of annual district and school dropout data as submitted under KRS 158.148 and 158.6453;

(b) State and federal resources and programs**, including, but not limited to**, extended school services; early learning centers; family resource and youth service centers; alternative education services; preschool; service learning; drug and alcohol prevention programs; School-to-Careers; High Schools that Work; school safety grants; and other relevant programs and services that could be used in a multidimensional strategy;

(c) Comprehensive student programs and services that include, but are not limited to, identification, counseling, mentoring, and other educational strategies for elementary, middle, and high school students who are demonstrating little or no success in school, who have poor school attendance, or who possess other risk factors that contribute to the likelihood of their dropping out of school; and

(d) Evaluation procedures to measure progress within school districts, schools, and statewide.

#9 Redefine KRS 151B.165 as follows.

Tuition and Fees for secondary pupils enrolled in the state secondary **and post-secondary** area vocational educational and technology centers operated under the Office of Career and Technical Education and the **Kentucky Community and Technical College System** shall be free to all residents of Kentucky.   – This waiver would allow secondary education students meeting career-readiness benchmarks to attend post-secondary vocational institutions.   Any high school student meeting these criteria could enroll in a post-secondary program. Transportation could be provided by the school district.

#10 Waive KRS 157.320 (1) (b) Virtual school setting creates a calendar that could have less or more than 175 days in which students are in attendance at the schools. We ask that the school district be funded for the equivalent 175 days of transportation. (See Waiver request 9). We also request additional ADA for students needing more than the equivalent of 175 six hour instructional days. In order to develop Personalized Plans, we cannot be held hostage to the length of the school year to meet individual student needs.

#11. Waive 702 KAR 7:125. Pupil attendance Section 1 (7) A pupil shall not be allowed to make up absences for the purpose of including make-up activities in the calculation of average daily attendance recover program. Students that miss school will be given an opportunity to make-up days via virtual learning experiences or additional time at school. Owsley County Schools will be performance based. Students will have opportunity to continue education even if not physically at school.

Owsley County would also like to reserve the right to expand its innovative program and waiver requests beyond the parameters of the components listed above. As new/improved innovative strategies are developed, Owsley County Schools may revise the plan to continue to be on the cutting edge of innovation.

The National High School Center at the American Institutes for Research stated that ninety-three percent of middle school students report that their goal is to attend college, however, only 44% enroll in college, and only 26% graduate with a college diploma within six years (Conley, 2012a; Conley 2012b)

There is growing consensus that students entering the workforce must demonstrate similarly high proficiency in academic knowledge and skills as those entering college (ACT 2006; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009; Educational Policy Improvement Center, 2009)

Research predicts that within the next 10 years, 63% of all jobs in the United States will require some postsecondary education and that 90% of new jobs in growing industries with high wages will require some postsecondary education (Carneale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010)

Component 2

Innovative Design Components

2A. *Exceptionally and accurately* identifies innovative programs, models or strategies which readily support innovation, based on principles of innovation, and student learning

School leaders in Owsley County understand that standards-based does not equate with standardized. It is important to provide not only a re-imagined school district for those students attending school, but other options or pathways for students who might want a hybrid experience comprised of on-line and face-to-face schooling, or an applied learning environment for students who want to earn their diploma and advanced credit through apprenticeships and other alternate settings. A description of each follows.

High School of Innovation: Organized around the tenets of a "student-centric" approach to learning. Through an intensive mentoring/advisee program, students, staff, parents and administrators work to develop a pathway that meets the needs and removes barriers to student learning and progress. This plan, referred to as the Personalized Education Plan, will drive the student focus until he/she meets the requirements outlined in the plan. At that point, students may move on to post-secondary schools or the work-force, or they may remain at OCHS beyond grade 12 to continue a post-secondary or vocational career education.

Owsley County School of Innovation makes innovative use of space, time, faculty and resources, providing flexibility for students to "drive their own learning through inquiry, as well as work collaboratively to research and create projects that reflect their knowledge, gleaning new, viable technology skills and becoming proficient communicators and advanced problem solvers" (Bell, 2010).   Most plans have a beyond-school component, facilitating internships and field studies and allowing students to graduate with a major such as health services, business entrepreneurship, agriculture, STEM and literary arts. Their educational plans and related majors build on local community assets, like the Farm to Table agricultural project in the district, the Area Health Education Centers, and writing projects at local colleges which boast literary artists in residence, such as Silas House at Berea College and Frank X Walker at UK. Students connect their projects and majors to their ILP, strengths, interests and future careers. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to complete dual credit courses beginning their sophomore year at local colleges in alignment with their ILP, participating in real time or virtual settings.

Hybrid High School: Using a combination of online, distance, and face-to-face learning, Owsley's Hybrid High accommodates students with a high interest in using technology as a primary tool for learning and who prefer to work independently with maximum flexibility of schedule. This option opens up learning for evenings and weekends and could enable students to balance work, high school and college early

enrollment courses if they so desire. The pedagogy applied in this setting draws from project-based approaches, with students focused on rigorous inquiry, research and design or product development. Collaboration with other students can be accomplished in class settings and/or via an online community using social media groups established through the school which would also allow teacher participation and feedback. Face-to-face instruction enables the teacher to fill in gaps in learning or skill development, to conference and provide direct feedback to students and to make available on-campus resources as well as connect students with distance learning courses not offered through the school system. E-mentoring is also a feature of Hybrid High, supporting student growth and achievement in real time or asynchronous settings, so students are connected even if not physically at school. The course of study is developed with the student using the ILP and surveying online and community resources to develop interests, talents and prepare students for college and career. Blackboard courses, job co-ops, MOOCs, and online tutorials are featured in this model.

Owsley County Virtual High School: Owsley County's Virtual High School makes a clear connection between individualized learning for non-traditional students and a focus on hands-on approaches. In the virtual setting students learn via design and construction using real and virtual materials. Individualized student needs are addressed through both mini-lessons and tasks enabling them to complete their projects and include informational reading, proposal writing, measurement and algebraic reasoning, and scientific understandings related to load, stress, lift and other concepts key to construction. Classroom projects are connected with local business or government projects, so the students work has real life application. They learn not only how to use academic and vocational skills to produce usable and needed products, but they also take postsecondary classes through Morehead State, EKU or Hazard CTC in business, management and entrepreneurship, so that when they leave school for a technical or certificate program and/or to enter the world of work, they are job-qualified and may start their own businesses. As in the other two high school options, the ILP helps students chart their path through high school, dual enrollment in technical and college courses, and career goals.

Owsley County College (Satellite Campus)

One of our most ambitious requests for Owsley County School District, through a partnership with a post-secondary institution, is to create an Owsley County Satellite College. The closest campus to Owsley County is over 30 miles away. Instead of trying to find a way to get our students on the campus, we are proposing that we create our own satellite campus. The campus would be housed in Owsley County High School allowing our students full access. The plan is to create at 2+2 or a 3+1 model in which students would complete 2 or 3 years of college at OCHS and then complete the post-secondary programs virtually or on the partner institutions campus. In this model, students of OCHS would begin taking classes as early as their sophomore year in High School. Pathways would be created to allow students to continue taking classes until their 12th grade year. Students that are successful would be allowed to remain in school for grades 13 and 14 to continue on a pathway. At the end of grade 14, students would only need 1 or 2 more additional years to complete a bachelor's degree. In order to be able to carry-forward with this approach, we must

be allowed to keep our students beyond grade 12, and also allow students completing graduation requirements to receive a graduation code. We ask this to allow students to apply for, and receive financial aid and scholarships before the end of grade 12.   This money would be used to help pay for college courses while still attending high school. KEES money could also be used after grade 12. Since students would still be enrolled in OCHS, Owsley County School district would assume all infrastructure costs in the partnership. The partnering institution and OCHS would provide instructors.   With a low overhead for the partnering institution, we hope to create a model where all students at OCHS could receive a complete post-secondary education free of charge.

Owsley County Vocational Program

We also request that Owsley County students to be able to attend post-secondary vocational institutions before graduation.   Students meeting career readiness benchmarks could enroll in post-secondary vocational programs.   Students could be transported daily to the post-secondary campuses. Again, this could occur before the completion of grade 12, and could continue on with students that are in grades 13 and 14. Tuition could be waived for secondary students (See Waiver 9), allowing students to complete or almost complete most post-secondary vocational programs before leaving the high school setting. Students would receive support from secondary school staff to help ensure success in this model.

The basic tenet of Owsley's plan is to re-imagine schooling for all students so we in fact graduate next generation learners. To do this, we must adapt all our approaches to schooling, since the old system will not produce the kinds of outcomes we are envisioning. Technology plays a key role in the school plan for reasons enumerated above, having to do with removing barriers and expanding both horizons and opportunities. The application format asks that we describe the components of the school plan separately, understanding that each is part of a larger system of change and invention for Owsley County Schools. A list of approaches follow:

Competency Based Credit:
   a. Students will receive credit based on competency
   b. Allow students to "test-out" of courses
   c. Credits can be assigned based on work performance
   d. Individual student plan will allow flexibility in course scheduling and credit requirements
Expanded Learning Opportunities:
   a. Expanded Dual-Credit program. We are looking to partner with an institution that would place a satellite campus in Owsley County High School.
   b. Distance Learning opportunities – LYNC technology

c. Blackboard ON-line classes
d. Off-site opportunities with local colleges and universities as well as agencies such as the Area Health Education Center
e. Work related opportunities (work study, apprenticeships, etc.)
f. 24/7 learning (Learning at home, summer opportunities, etc.)
g. Explicit instruction in college knowledge skills such as critical thinking, problem formulation, time management and goal setting that mirror 21st century skills

Multiple Assessments/Pathways to Graduation:
a. Early College program
b. Distance Learning opportunities – LYNC technology
c. Blackboard ON-line classes
d. Off-site opportunities that include field studies in students' area of career interest
e. MOOCs
f. Work related opportunities (work study, apprenticeships, etc.)
g. Three-school option of High School of Innovation, Hybrid High School and Applied Learning Academy

Innovative Learning Environment:
a. High School of Innovation organized personalized learning, with balance of formal instruction and independent group project work in open, dedicated spaces on campus but outside the classroom that promote student research and collaboration; flexible use of time; teacher support for projects on as-needed basis; and student products juried by other students, educators and community members
b. Hybrid High School organized around a combination of online and face-to-face instruction, with students setting the pace of learning, and with peer collaboration extended through use of social media
c. Owsley County Virtual School organized around work mostly outside of school, in internships, field studies or college coursework that typically falls outside the traditional school day, with faculty support for students connecting school to work
d. Owsley County Satellite Campus allows students in grades 10-14 to obtain college credit. Students in this program can earn up to 3 years of college
e. Owsley County Vocational Program allows students meeting career readiness benchmarks to attend post-secondary vocational institutions free of charge.
f. In all three settings emphasis on student voice and choice, building on students' desire to engage in generating solutions to problems in the larger community, and opening the physical space of the school to alternate settings

Owsley County also reserves the right to expand its innovative program beyond the parameters of the components listed above. As new/improved innovative strategies are developed, Owsley County Schools may revise the plan to continue to be on the cutting edge of innovation.

2B. Plan *comprehensively* describes how the innovative program, model or strategies will improve learning for students

In order to break down all barriers to learning, Owsley County schools must be given relief from KRS regulations that promote a one-size fits all approach. Regulations that involve curriculum and pedagogical requirements must be waived or modified to give the district flexibility to develop plans that meet individual student needs. Graduations requirements need to modified in order to allow students flexibility to develop skills they need. Students that can meet College or Career Readiness standards should be consider graduation ready, and not forced to take course work that does not meet their needs. Also, while Owsley County is not requesting additional funding, we do ask that funding structures are modified to meet the needs of the 21st century learner. In order to meet the needs of each student, the district must be able to provide transportation to Vo/tech centers and college campuses. Also, students in a virtual environment are not allowed to receive funding for transportation for food service. However, the additional costs of infrastructures, internet access, software and teacher development make it critical that these funding sources not be lost. We must also look at the needs of students that need additional time. Year-round schooling, including opportunities for students in the summer months for college courses, vocational courses, and co-ops are needed. Attendance regulations are antiquated and still promote the six-hour/177 day approach. Again, we need relief from these laws.

If Owsley County is granted innovative status, working the KDE, Owsley County will be able to develop and "Student-Centric" model that meets the needs of STUDENTS, not initiatives passed at the state or federal level. Owsley County assures that each plan will be rigorous and will ensure a much higher level of success for student learning. An example might be a student that is identified as MMD. The student is in High School, but still struggles with basic math skills. The student has a very high interest in automotive, and while he struggles greatly with core curriculum, he thrives in the vocational school environment. The state of Kentucky requires this student to take Algebra 2 and Biology. Neither of these courses develop skills necessary for this student to develop or prepare him for his future. If this student was allowed to take course work that related directly his area of interest and strength he could thrive, however, he is forced to take course-work that does not meet his needs or interests. The student becomes very disinterested in school, and is an extreme drop-out risk. We must move away from this model!

2C. Plan *thoroughly and clearly* explains how identified strategies will lead to students who are better prepared for success in life and work

As stated earlier, Owsley County School system is a very poor rural district. Limited resources, student opportunity, and exposure create an environment in which student motivation often is lacking. Traditionally, Owsley County Students have had to leave in order to develop skills necessary to becoming college and career ready. Limited course offerings have stifled student interest. Using technology and the ability to partner with other schools, Owsley County hopes to open the world of student learning. The use of technology does not have to be limited to just school hours; the 24/7 learning approach will give the students the opportunity to learn anytime anywhere. Microsoft 365 will allow students to join distance learning classes from their homes. Blackboard classes will be available to students who cannot attend school during the traditional 8am-3pm window. The plan will also allow students to substitute work experience and job-related learning in the place of traditional courses. competency based credits will allow students to "test out" of classes or receive credit for performance based competencies. District of Innovation status will allow the district to make these changes and will also support new structures for schooling detailed in the first section of this application. For the district to achieve dramatically improved outcomes, it cannot do business as usual. Instead, innovation, challenge and inventiveness need to characterize all aspects of secondary schooling no matter what the setting, and Innovation status can assure that the district realizes this vision.

Owsley County is taking seriously the District of Innovation's charge to personalize learning for students and to move away from the industrial model of education to what is referred to in the professional literature as Learning 2.0 (Kerchner, 2012) and by the KDE as next generation learning. This means looking at new structures, pedagogy and resources that will motivate students to achieve in school and at the same time prepare them for college and career. In doing so Owsley staff is keenly aware of the barriers facing students in this small, rural district in Eastern Kentucky, the poorest in the state and one of the poorest in the nation. Lack of economic and career opportunity over generations has diminished students' aspirations for college and career, and eroded their motivation to remain and excel in school. Moreover, Owsley County is isolated, leading to many students being unaware of opportunities in the larger world beyond their rural community. The district is committed to addressing these barriers and broadening horizons for students so they have a larger sense of what is possible for them. Many students in our community have never been exposed to anything outside of Owsley County. Often when students are taken on field trips, we find that many of our students have never placed a table service order. When we focus on gaps, we must first look at the community in which our students live. Owsley County has no fast food restaurants, no stop lights and no department stores. In order for us to get students prepared for college or careers, we must first provide them opportunities to experience what is outside the borders of Owsley County.

High school teachers estimate that 63% of their graduating seniors will be adequately prepared for college-level coursework without the need for remediation and that 51% will graduate from college (MetLife, 2011). Data shows that only 25% of high school graduates who took the ACT test were ready for college-level work (ACT 2012).

According to Tom Vander Ark, CEO of Getting Smart and former Executive Director of Education for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, about two-thirds of American students leave high school unprepared for college or a career and with the rising expectations and increasing number of students living in poverty, America K-12 education is faced with greater challenges than ever before (The Future of Learning: Personalized, Adaptive, and Competency-Based, 2013).

2D. Goals and expected outcomes for the strategy are *significantly* supported by innovation

Importance of Status: The Owsley County School District innovation plan was developed after a thoughtful process in which school and district administrators, teachers, and parents examined the value of alternative delivery of education. Additionally, the six design principles for innovation from the KDE web site were used to formulate the ideas for this proposal to ensure we addressed college and career readiness in a systemic way. http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Pages/default.aspx

KDE Design Principles for Innovation
1. **World Class Knowledge and Skills: knowledge and skills that prepare students for global success and competency**
2. **Personalized Learning: set goals, assess progress to ensure student academic and developmental support**
3. **Anytime, Anywhere Learning: flexible & Real World learning environment that provide constructive learning experiences**
4. **Student Voice: students owning and shaping their individual learning experience**
5. **Performance-based Learning: enabling students to demonstrate mastery based on high and shared expectations**
6. **Comprehensive systems of support: providing a culture of support for all students (i.e., social, emotional, physical and cognitive)**

- o Use of project-based learning to engage all students in deep learning, to change the teacher-student dynamic as well increase flexibility in use of space, time and teacher assignment, and to help students become both interdependent and independent learners who are eager to pursue formal learning beyond high school. **Project Based Learning: Explained.** (http://youtu.be/LMCZvGesRz8)
- o Use of distance technology to increase access to courses and other learning experiences for all students regardless of setting, and also provide an alternative setting to secondary school for non-traditional students.
- o Development of an individualized educational plan for each student which builds on the ILP but extends that to create customized opportunities for rigorous learning while in high school, including the option of performance-based courses where students can test out of classes for which they already possess the knowledge and skills.
- o Use of work-related settings, internships, field studies and other opportunities with local businesses, colleges and area centers leading to

students graduating from high school with a major in a field they want to pursue.
- o Extended school year for students that need additional time to gain mastery. This is contingent upon additional funding to support extended days.
- o Develop innovated supplemental education programs such as the online summer reading program. This is a program in which students receive "internet vouchers" (free internet service for summer) in exchange for participating in online book discussions. This program is being planned to address the significant summer slide many students have in reading comprehension skills. It is ready to begin this summer.
- o Any other innovative strategy that is within the scope of the plan, but may be implemented in the future.

2E. Identified strategies, models, or programs reflect a *strong* connection to current district initiatives

Previous examples of district innovation upon which this proposal builds include:
- o Starting in 2010, Owsley County Schools piloted the snow-bound project for schools that missed an excessive number of days due to weather. During this pilot, the program was embraced and flourished. Data were collected and it was determined that significant learning was taking place during snow days. This led the district to look at alternative methods of instruction could be utilized to enhance the instructional program at OCHS.
- o Starting in 2012-13 SY, two other innovative approaches were utilized. First, distance learning using Microsoft LYNC (365) was embraced by the school. Students in Owsley County were able to join students in Madison County to take Mythology, a course that could never be offered in Owsley County Schools. Owsley staff also partnered with Lee County sending 4 courses to students there. All the courses were shared using Microsoft 365 technology.
- o Another innovative learning opportunity was the Owsley County Early College initiative. Using partnerships with Hazard Technical and Community College and Morehead State University, Owsley County High School was able to offer seven dual credit college classes to students who had met college readiness benchmarks. The classes were taught by collegiately certified staff and because they were employees of the district, the classes were offered free of charge. From this, the district began to look at ways to expand innovative opportunities to students. Using funding from a Promise Neighborhood initiative, Blackboard learning was purchased for five years. Teachers were able to blend learning using traditional learning methods and online techniques.
- o Also, through the Promise Neighborhood, seven complete online courses are being developed with the goal of having an entire High School curriculum online within 5 years. Students will be able to utilize these courses for a variety of reasons including credit recovery, early graduation, and/or to open schedule so they can complete other electives. With the ability to take courses online, it gives students a much greater flexibility in their individual educational endeavors. Administrators in the system also traveled to Greeneville, TN. to visit the

Niswonger foundation to view their innovative learning model. The Niswonger Foundation connected 27 schools in an effort to increase rigor and educational opportunities for students of Eastern Tennessee.   The foundation of this model is breaking down barriers to learning. All of these helped guide the Owsley County School District in development of their plan.

- o Owsley County School district adopted Carnegie Math in 2009. This approach is an example of hybrid learning. Students are involved in the classroom setting, but also have a technology piece which is completed during lab time or at home. These innovative approaches can be expanded in our Hybrid High School approach.
- o The Farm to Table project which started through a partnership with the University of Kentucky entitled Homegrown Kentucky, has led to the development of student real world learning, agriculture knowledge and opportunities for developing student business entrepreneurship, as well as a model for innovation. http://homegrownkentucky.wix.com/home
- o In October 2013, the Owsley County Schools was named an Innovation Award Recipient by the Appalachian Innovative Collaborative for increasing student learning opportunities.
- o See Appendix at end of application for articles and videos about Owsley County Innovative Programs.

Specific Barriers to Student Learning: Owsley County is located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. It is the poorest county in the state of Kentucky and is rated as one of the poorest counties in the nation. Owsley County has very limited opportunities for its citizens. The leading employer in the county is the school system and there is no industry. Owsley County was once a tobacco producing community, but no longer. There are no active coal mines in the county. Due to the small population and limited tax base, Owsley County Schools struggle to meet the needs of the student population. Students have very limited opportunities outside the core content areas. Limited staffing makes it impossible for the school to have a variety of course offering for its student population. Owsley County Schools have traditionally been low performing across all groups. The population is almost exclusively Caucasian, and learning gaps exist only between students in regular education and those in special education. Currently the High School ranks in the 75th percentile when compared to schools throughout the state. These numbers reflect the low socio-economic conditions of the county and lack of opportunities. Quite frankly, Owsley County Schools need to re-imagine schooling and create an environment meeting the unique needs of all its students, both regular education and special education, as well as helping students to envision larger possibilities for their education and their future.

Faith Hill Church
Donated by Betty Gabbard

District of Innovation Implementation Plan

School Name	Innovation Strategies/Models	Goals for Improved Student Outcomes	Evidence of 70% Affirmative Vote of Eligible Employees to Participate
Owsley County High School	Personalized Educational Plan that meets specific need of each student.	Each student will have growth in student performance. The focus of this plan is graduation rate and College and Career Readiness pathways.	25-0 Employee affirmation through staff vote.
Owsley County Elementary School	Blended learning and development of 21st century learning skills	Students will be able to utilize Blackboard and other online programs as well as develop skills necessary to be successful in an individualized learning environment.	26-0 Staff vote

*Please complete this section for each school participating in the application. Additional school applications are in the Appendix

Component 3
Student Service Plan

3A. Clearly and specifically communicates the total number of students being serviced by the proposed innovation plan

In addition to and including the components listed above, Owsley County intends to personalize education for its secondary students by developing and implementing a coordinated system of advisement, support and opportunity. Piecemeal efforts will not suffice to prepare Owsley High School students for the challenges they will face in pursuing postsecondary education and rewarding careers. Instead, an integrated and coordinated effort is needed to change the conditions of schooling for Owsley County High School so that students perform at higher levels and graduate high school ready for college and career. The plan is fully inclusive with ALL students in Owsley County High School (Grades 7-12) taking part in the process by year 4 and with students at Owsley County Elementary school being exposed to critical skills necessary to be able to be successful in the 21st learning environment. Students at OCES will develop skills by working in blended environments in Blackboard, to support the traditional classroom, but also with enhanced online learning components in each class. Elementary will also focus on the critical interpersonal skills (speaking, writing, and listening) they need to become 21st century professionals. (See Owsley County Elementary School Chart on page 27 of online programs that are building the foundation for a District of Innovation)

Owsley County Elementary School

Grade Levels	ILP	Carnegie Math	Accelerated Reading	Sumdog Math	IXL Math	Blackboard	Study Island	Reading Eggs
Kindergarten			X	X			X	X
First			X	X			X	X
Second			X	X			X	
Third			X	X	X		X	
Fourth			X	X	X	X	X	
Fifth			X	X	X	X	X	
Sixth	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

The basis of Owsley County's plan is to expand the role of the ILP process so that every student has an enhanced personal educational plan (PEP). The foundation will begin in 6th, 7th and 8th grade as the ILP process along with the Explore and MAP data will be used to create individual student pathways. Beginning in the 9th grade, every student at Owsley County High School will work with teacher advisors, counselors, parents and administrators to develop a personal educational plan (PEP). Each plan will be specific to the needs of each student. Students will utilize ILP interest inventories, test data and teacher recommendations to help form education plan and establish the educational goals. Students and parents will be required to have specific input on their own educational goals and pathway. Once a plan has been established, the team will create an option or pathway for the student to follow in order to meet his/her needs as outlined in the mission and vision section of this proposal under the three pathways. Each educational pathway will be monitored and evaluated for each student regularly by teachers, counselors, administrators and the individual student, since self-regulation and self-assessment are key skills for college readiness. If a student is not making adequate progress, his/her plan will be modified to meet individual needs. Formative assessments such as MAP, as well as teacher grades, work experience and other evaluations will be utilized to monitor progress. Each student must show growth and measurable attainment goals will be set for all three pathways which reflect achievement on state assessments and EPAS for EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT tests. *(Students in grades 4-5-6 attending OCES and having extreme barriers to learning will also have an individual education plan, monitored using the same criteria as above. Students may include those with significant behavior, social, or attendance issues. Advanced students who are eligible for an accelerated curriculum may also have a plan developed that includes innovative learning strategies.)*

3B. *Clearly* and *specifically* communicates the grade levels of the students serviced by the proposed plan

Student Service Plan (Year 1)				
Proposed Strategy	Expected Outcomes	Sources of Data	Total Number of Students Targeted by Grade level	Total Number of Students in Special Populations/Underrepresented Group
College/Career Readiness	An increase of the number of students graduating college or career ready by 10% per year.	K-PREP, MAP assessments, EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, EOC assessments, Compass testing, WorkKeys, ASVAB, Study Island	Middle: 7th –10-15 students 8th – 10-15 students High: 9th – 10 10th -10	SES: 45 (91% of 50) Gender: Disability: 6 (12% of 50)

		Assessments, Accelerated Reading Assessments, KOSSA, Industry Certificates	11th 15 12th 15	
Cohort graduation rate	100% 4-year graduation rate for all students	4 year graduation rate	High: All Students	SES: All Race/Ethnicity: All Gender: All Disability: All

Student Service Plan (Year 2)

Proposed Strategy	Expected Outcomes	Sources of Data	Total Number of Students Targeted by Grade level	Total Number of Students in Special Populations/Underrepresented Group
College/Career Readiness	An increase of the number of students graduating college or career ready by 10% per year.	K-PREP, MAP assessments, EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, EOC assessments, Compass testing, WorkKeys, ASVAB, Study Island Assessments, Accelerated Reading Assessments, KOSSA, Industry Certificates	Middle: 7th –20 students 8th – 20 students High: 9th – 20 10th -20 11th - 30 12th - 30	SES: 91 (91% of 100) Gender: Disability: 12 (12% of 100)
Cohort graduation rate	100% 4-year graduation rate for all students	4 year graduation rate	High: All Students	SES: All Race/Ethnicity: All Gender: All

				Disability: All

Student Service Plan (Year 3)

Proposed Strategy	Expected Outcomes	Sources of Data	Total Number of Students Targeted by Grade level	Total Number of Students in Special Populations/Underrepresented Group
College/Career Readiness	An increase of the number of students graduating college or career ready by 10% per year.	K-PREP, MAP assessments, EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, EOC assessments, Compass testing, WorkKeys, ASVAB, Study Island Assessments, Accelerated Reading Assessments, KOSSA, Industry Certificates	Middle: 7th –20 students 8th – 20 students High: 9th - 40 10th - 40 11th - 60 12th 60	SES 182 (91% of 200) Gender: Disability: 24 (12% of 200)
Cohort graduation rate	100% 4-year graduation rate for all students	4 year graduation rate	High: All Students	SES: All Race/Ethnicity: All Gender: All Disability: All

Student Service Plan (Year 4 and 5)

Proposed Strategy	Expected Outcomes	Sources of Data	Total Number of Students Targeted by Grade level	Total Number of Students in Special Populations/Underrepresented Group
College/Career Readiness	An increase of the number of students graduating college or career ready by 10% per year.	K-PREP, MAP assessments, EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, EOC assessments, Compass testing, WorkKeys, ASVAB, Study Island Assessments, Accelerated Reading Assessments, KOSSA, Industry Certificates	Middle: 7th –25 students 8th – 25 students High: 9th - (all students) 10th - (all students) 11th - (all students) 12th - (all students)	SES: All Race/Ethnicity: All Gender: All Disability: All
Cohort graduation rate	100% 4-year graduation rate for all students	4 year graduation rate	High: All Students	SES: All Race/Ethnicity: All Gender: All Disability: All

Owsley County intends to extend the Personalized Education Plan to all students grade 9-12 by 2017-18. Students in grades 7-8 will also be considered if they have significant barriers or if they have significant needs (e.g. gifted students). In year one, students will be selected based on need and student, teacher and parental input.

3C. *Comprehensively* and *systematically* provides service for a variety of students (grade level or special population)

As referenced in the mission and vision section of this proposal, each of the three pathways marks a departure from traditional schooling, specifically, the organization, content and structure of a project-based learning school; blended learning with extensive technology use and increased flexibility and independence of a hybrid school; and the independence and application of skills outside the school setting in the applied learning academy. Typically students have not developed the necessary skills and habits to function as independent, self-sufficient learners, to collaborate with other students in the design and development of work products with real world applications, to learn in hybrid settings or to

organize their time to accomplish both internships and coursework independently. Teachers will need to assume new roles, not as the person providing direct instruction on a daily basis but rather as someone facilitating both individual and group learning. In addition, taking dual credit courses on the college campus may require additional tutoring and mentoring for students to be successful. Owsley County HS will provide that additional support to students on days they are not attending college classes through face-to-face and distance means to ensure student success. As we work together with teachers, parents, students, and administrators, every student at Owsley County HS in grades 9-12, from our general education population to our special education population, from our gifted education population to our students who struggle but are not identified as special education a personal educational plan (PEP) will be developed and monitored. (See the Monitoring Time-Line Below)

Grade	ILP	PEP	Planning Meeting	4-Week Check	8-Week Check	12-Week Check	16-Week Check	20-Week Check	24-Week Check	28 Week Check	32-Week Check	End Of Year Check
6	X					X			X			X
7	X					X			X			X
8	X					X			X			X
9	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
12	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

At each planning meeting, the needs of individual students will be determined and academic goals will be set. Each four week check will examine progress toward those goals and will ensure that any supports (i.e., afterschool ESS services, access to materials, etc.) are provided. Mentoring, tutoring and advising will take place with the student and new goals will be created.   Each plan will be fluid, and modifications can be made based on the needs and progress of each student.

3D. *Exceptionally* reflects a commitment to equity or *exceptionally* demonstrates an appreciation for diversity

It is imperative we develop an innovative approach to schooling that initiates a paradigm shift in how we educate all students in today's society. Schooling is no longer defined by Monday – Friday 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Districts, especially rural districts, are often faced with staffing issues and lack staff or funding for advanced course offerings for its students may be able to share teachers and content through a technology based hybrid model.

Owsley County is a small county of 197.41 square miles (Owsley County Quick Facts from the US Census Bureau, 2011). The average median family income in Owsley County for the years 2007-2012 was $19,344.00 with the state average being $42,248.00. According to 2010 census data, the percentage of persons living below poverty was 39.3%. Owsley County Schools had a free and reduced student lunch count of 91% for the 2009 school year. (Kentucky Department of Education, 2010)

Census Data from 2010, reveals little change. Of the county's population 25 and older 22% has less than a 9th grade education. The percentage with a high school degree hovers near half at 57.7%. A mere 2.9% of the same population has a graduate or professional degree. Of the total estimated population of 4,671, 41.5% live below the poverty level. There is little ethnic diversity as 98.5% of the population identifies themselves as white. (US Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2006 – 2010) A report published on February 11, 2012 by the NY Times entitled The Geography of Government Benefits indicates that 53.07% of the county's total individual incomes is the result of government assistance (2012).

Additionally, all across the United States rural schools and their unique context and lack of resources provide for a set of unique challenges in meeting the instructional needs of students. One third of the schools in the United States are rural and serve nearly 10 million students. Rural schools are more likely to have fewer than 200 students. In fact, more than 50% of rural schools have fewer than 400 students. Combine small class size with geographic isolation and lack of staffing and other resources, and you have the setting for limited class offerings. Online distance education has been offered as one possible solution to overcoming these obstacles. (Irvin, Farmer, de la Varre & Keene, 2009).

An innovative approach will ensure that all students have the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and develop skill necessary for the 21st century world.

Component 4
Professional Development

4A. Specifically and clearly identifies professional development for faculty and staff which clearly support innovation

Included in the list below are the professional development sessions related to the innovative design components described in Component 2. The primary needs associated with the implementation of these design components include curriculum and instruction, technology, and data usage. Training will take place in a variety of environments, including, but not limited to, professional development sessions, conferences, faculty meetings, and professional learning communities.

Keeping the needs in mind, the District plans to develop a multi-year sequence of training and coaching with partner CTL (Collaborative for Teaching and Learning), to launch multiple pathways and embed practices like competency-based credit, blended instruction, integrated use of web 2.0 tools, learning that emphasizes creativity and invention, and authentic work products to demonstrate learning. The first two years will provide intensive support for teachers and at the same time build the capacity of instructional coaches and administrators to support and monitor implementation. During the third and fourth years, training and coaching will continue but with less intensity and a greater emphasis on teachers coaching each other and sharing what they've learned, moving toward gradual release. The last year will focus on sustainability and identification of in-house experts to carry forward the work. Details on content and structure of professional development follow.

<div align="center">

2013-2014 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

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- o **What is Project-Based Learning?** Teachers will participate in project-based learning professional development, differentiated by which setting or pathway they teach within. Teachers at the High School of Innovation will need the most in depth understanding and practice with project-based learning, technology integration and creation of student work products. Teachers in the other two settings will use principles of project-based learning but it will not be the organizing factor for their school pathway; their PD will focus on how to integrate projects with hybrid and applied learning. Emphasis will include how to design projects from the KCAS and infuse rigor and connection. http://www.edutopia.org/stw-replicating-pbl-overview-video
- o **Content Area Literacy: Adolescent Literacy Model** CTL will provide formal training, job-embedded PD and ongoing coaching both face-to-face and via distance. This blended model will mirror the kind of hybrid instruction around which Hybrid High School will be organized, and will have utility for teachers in all three pathways. CTL will link teachers together using various social media tools to share lessons,

student work samples, and ideas for improving their use of flexible time, space and formative assessment.

- **PD 360: A Tool for Collaboration and Learning** Teachers will be grouped into flexible PLCs for continued development and study. Part of the continuous learning model at Owsley County's high schools is intensive job embedded coaching using state provided resources through PD 360 and CIITS to create individual teacher professional development plans. These individual teacher professional development plans provide teachers a map for continuing their development as 21st century educators. These sessions will be held at regular intervals throughout the year to assist teachers with the utilization of this resource to expand their professional networks and to both share and to learn from others regarding personalization of learning.

- **CIITS** Faculty will receive training in multiple areas in CIITS to include developing assessments, using data, and curriculum development.

o **Professional Learning Communities** In the PLCs, teachers will take on the roles of rigorous study groups as outlined in DuFour's *PLCs at Work* (1998) to study teacher instructional practices, impact on student learning, and creating a comprehensive college-going culture of high expectations for all students. The PLCs will be flexible so that teachers can be grouped in content area groups for portions of their study and cross-content area groupings to address the cross curricular project designs. The PLCs are made possible through the flexible course design in which students will be working. As students collaborate in project teams, teachers will be freed to work on instructional response and improvement.

o **Blackboard** The use of Blackboard to increase distance learning opportunities at Owsley is already in place and through Berea's Promise Neighborhoods Grant.   Owsley County High School is working with CTL to introduce online course design, rigorous blended instructional models, and distance learning. The training will continue through a variety of approaches that model the types of instruction that teachers will be using with their own students. All teachers are developing online blended approaches that allow students opportunities for independent learning as well as structured synchronous and asynchronous interactions. This work will continue with CTL as well as part of the PLC structure at Owsley County High School. Currently, Blackboard (along with other online platforms) is utilized at both schools to support the Snow Pilot initiative and the Owsley County Virtual School.

o **P20 Innovation Learning Lab's Next Generation Leadership Academy** Teachers and Administrators will take part in the P20 Innovation Learning Lab's Next Generation Leadership Academy. The Academy will assist the development of new learning systems designed to increase the percentage of graduates ready for collage and career.

o **Advisee/Mentoring** Teachers and Administrators will receive training in mentoring and advisement. Teachers will learn how to effectively use ILP and student performance data to assist students in creating Personalized Education Plans. As the innovative program expands, teachers will assume greater roles as mentors and student advisors.

o **Collegiate Certification** Teachers will be encouraged to go back to school and earn advanced certifications that allow teachers to instruct dual-credit courses.   In order to be able to provide needed course-work for students, we must look to expand the number of courses and teacher certifications.

- **Data Analysis**—This session will build upon previous data analysis sessions and will include facilitated discussion of released assessment data for teachers. In grade level teams, teachers will identify focus areas for improvement and outline specific strategies for addressing those areas. In follow up faculty meetings and professional learning communities, faculty will develop plans for addressing those needs utilizing the district of innovation design components. Multiple sessions will target state assessment data as well as MAP data.
- **Follett Destiny**   Teachers will receive training provided by the school media specialist in the utilization of Follett Destiny, Destiny Quest, and Follett E-Books.
- **Shaping School Culture** Faculty at Owsley County High School will complete a book study of **Shaping School Culture** as a means to examine and improve the learning environment to meet the needs of all students.
- **21st Century Skills** Professional development will be provided at both schools, Owsley County Elementary and Owsley County High School, to ensure that teachers are properly trained in what 21st century skills are and are equipped with a variety of instructional strategies for teaching them.

4B. Specifically and clearly explains why proposed professional development will prepare faculty and staff for increased success in innovation and student learning.

In re-imagining secondary schooling, Owsley County understands that it needs to invent new roles for faculty, and provide a comprehensive approach to professional development to support these roles. This approach includes intensive training and modeling, regular coaching both face-to-face and virtual, and the creation of well-designed professional learning communities (PLC's) where teachers can collaborate as they change their practice. Moreover, administrative engagement, encouragement, modeling and support are necessary to make and sustain changes in pedagogy and school structures. Few teachers were trained to facilitate small working groups of students, each focused on a unique project with applications to the larger community, or to blend online and interactive classroom practice, or to keep connected with students who are engaged in local internships or field studies. Even fewer bring experience of working in settings where time and space are flexible, where teachers may have differentiated roles, and where students are not working on the same tasks at the same time.

4C. Comprehensively and systematically prepares adult learners to service a variety of students (grade level or special population)

Teachers in grades K-12 are committed to implementing individual learning approaches for students. At a faculty meeting in which the District of Innovation application was discussed, new numbers teachers committed to the changes necessary to fully implement those changes outlined in the application. Professional development sessions will be offered at both Owsley County Elementary and Owsley County Middle/High School that will support the initiative. Part of the on-going staff development would entail a strong vertical alignment of curriculum, alignment of high expectations, and sharing of instructional practices.

4D. Exceptionally reflects a commitment to equity and demonstrates an appreciation for diversity.

Owsley County is a small district, approximately 800 students and 66 teachers. Professional development sessions will include Our demographic make-up is primarily Caucasian; however, our diversity lies in the needs of our students. Owsley County District professional development will include components for differentiation so that the individual needs of all students with a variety of learning styles are met. At both schools within the district, each staff is working with community partners and institutions of higher learning to individualize the learning experience for ALL students. In addition, all staff members receive training in the areas of preventing and addressing the issues of bullying and in restraint and seclusion, and core teams at both schools have received safe crisis management training to help remove related barriers to student learning.

Component 5 Timeline

5A. Timeline *thoroughly* outlines a plan of innovation implementation

Owsley County has sought and employed the use of innovative models in the past and continues to do so during the current 2013-14 school year; however, the lack of innovation status and the resulting waivers that innovation status brings is a road block to full implementation of the district's vision.

Due to the significant change that will occur, the school district will utilize a tiered approach to implementation. During year one, the school plans to develop personalized education plans (PEP) for 50 students. This initial wave of students will be students who have expressed interest in developing more rigorous educational pathways, student who possess the skills, abilities, and /or have already met benchmarks for college and/or career readiness, or students who have barriers to learning that would greatly benefit from a more personalized approach. After a thorough pilot and review of the model, the school plans to expand the program by degrees to eventually involve all students in PEP. In the final refinement of the PEP, the Owsley County School district would operate satellite campuses for grade 13 and 14 for students given G codes.

Year Four: PEP for ALL high school students

Year Three: PEP for 200

Year Two: PEP for 100

Year One: PEP for 50 high school students

These plans are tentative, but the school and district believe that these timelines are very attainable. The following is a tentative timeline for year one:

Development of innovative plan	Spring-Fall, 2013
Blackboard course development	Current, 2013 -ongoing
LYNC/distance learning training	January, 2014
Innovative Status – accepted	February, 2014
Communication Plan enacted (all stakeholders notified of innovative status)	Spring, 2014
SBDM/Board Policy revision (reflect innovation status)	Spring, 2014
KOSSA testing	February, 2014
ACT, ASVAB and WorkKeys testing	March, 2014
Compass testing	April, 2014
EOC testing	May, 2014
Innovative program review (year 1 holistic)	May, 2014
Development of 14-15 SY Master Schedule (reflect innovative status)	May, 2014
Innovative learning professional development	May, 2014 - ongoing
Meeting with student and parents – Innovation orientation (14-15SY)	May/June, 2014
Personalized Education Plan (PEP) development (student scheduling 14-15SY)	June/July, 2014
Extended PD for innovative model (PBL, distance learning, etc)	August, 2014 -- Ongoing
Launch year 2 innovative model	August, 2014
Student-plan reviews – Month	September, 2014 -- Ongoing
Second Semester scheduling	November
Review student progress (district)	December
Second Semester Begins	January, 2015
KOSSA testing	February, 2015
ACT, ASVAB and WorkKeys testing	March, 2015
Compass testing	April, 2015
EOC testing	May, 2015
Innovative program review (holistic)	May, 2015

Timeline Table

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
50 high school students enrolled in virtual school, independent study and/or online courses (PEP)	100 high school students enrolled in virtual school, independent study, and/or online courses	200 high school students enrolled in virtual school, independent study and/or online courses Career Coop/Job Shadowing/Career Mentoring	300 high school students enrolled in virtual school, independent study and/or online courses Career Coop/Job Shadowing/Career Mentoring	All high school students enrolled in virtual school, independent study and/or online courses Career Coop/Job Shadowing/Career Mentoring
All students K – 12 will participate in snow pilot days virtually through Blackboard	Virtual and snow pilot school days for all students. Utilization of Blackboard.	Continuation of virtual and snow pilot school days	Continuation of virtual and snow pilot school days	Continuation of virtual and snow pilot school days
Grades 4 and 5 will participate in career educations and career exploration				
Grade 6 will begin the use of the ILP as a first				

step toward PEP				
Grades K-6 will utilize the following: Success for All Reading program, accelerated reading, Study Island, IX SumDog.	Continuation of K-6 SFA, AR, Study Island, IXL, and SumDog	Continuation of K-6 SFA, AR, Study Island, IXL and SumDog	Continuation of K-6 SFA, AR, Study Island, IXL and SumDog	Continuation of K-6 SFA, AR, Study Island, IXL and SumDog
Grades 6-11 will utilize Carnegie math and development of the ILP.	Continuation of grades 6-11 use of Carnegie and ILP	Continuation of grades 6-11 use of Carnegie and ILP	Continuation of grades 6-11 use of Carnegie and ILP	Continuation of grades 6-11 use of Carnegie and ILP
Individualized waiving of graduation requirements for students that have met benchmarks	Development of a PEP for 100 high school students (ACT and/or career ready)	Add 100 additional high school students for PEP (200 total)	Add 100 additional high school students for PEP (300 total)	PEP for all high school students

Some students participating in performance based courses	Increase number of students in performance based courses (CCR Plan)	Increase number of students in performance based courses (CCR Plan)	Increase number of students in performance based courses (CCR Plan)	Increase number of students in performance based courses (CCR Plan)
Professional Development for Staff	Continue PD for staff	Continue PD for staff	Continue PD for staff	Continue PD for staff
Grade 13 and 14		Owsley County School district serves as satellite campus for partnering colleges and universities. Students with G codes attend "higher education at home"	Owsley County School district serves as satellite campus for partnering colleges and universities. Students with G codes attend "higher education at home"	Owsley County School district serves as satellite campus for partnering colleges and universities. Students with G codes attend "higher education at home"

*Personalized education plans may consist of virtual school, independent study, dual credit and/or online college courses, Career Coop/Job Shadowing/Career Mentoring

5B. Evidence of *very strong* sense of urgency at all levels of the school district community for innovation plan

Why Owsley County? Owsley County is a small county of 197.41 square miles (Owsley County Quick Facts from the US Census Bureau, 2011). Socioeconomic factors from 2008 census data indicate that the median household income was $19,829 per person and the median per capital income was $10,742. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008) Owsley County Schools had a free and reduced student lunch count of 91% for the 2009 school year. (Kentucky Department of Education, 2010)

From the perspective of being able to break the aforementioned cycles of poverty and despair the next set of census data is startling. County wide in 2008, the number of persons 25 years old and older with high school diploma or a GED equated to 907. In a county of 4,634 people, only 907 had a high school diploma or its equivalent (2008). A meager 152 persons 25 and older had a college degree. **In 2008, only 3.28% of individuals had a college degree in Owsley County** (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

Likewise, Census Data from 2010 reveals little change. Of the county's population 25 and older **22% have less than a 9th grade education**. The percentage with a high school degree hovers near half at 57.7%. **A mere 2.9% of the same population has a graduate or professional degree**. Of the total estimated population of 4,671, 41.5% live below the poverty level. There is little ethnic diversity as 98.5% of the population identifies themselves as white. (US Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2006 – 2010) A report published on February 11, 2012 by the NY Times entitled The Geography of Government Benefits indicates that 53.07% of the county's total individual incomes is the result of government assistance (2012).

In order for Owsley County to compete in the 21st century economic world, Owsley County must overcome these barriers to develop learners who are prepared to meet the demands of the world.   We can no longer continue on the status quo path.   We must become more "Student-Centric" meeting the specific needs of every student, while developing an innovative model that breaks down barriers to learning, exposes our students to the world outside our community, and creates the same opportunities for our students to succeed that other students have in more affluent schools and districts.   This cannot be accomplished through the traditional 8am to 3pm, August to May approach. We must think outside the box. We must create an environment specific to each student that will help them reach their maximum potential.

5C. Evidence of *significant* levels of risk taking and focus on innovation

Continuous Improvement and Risk Taking: Owsley County School district promotes continuous improvement by thinking in divergent ways. Several examples follow, emphasizing innovative ways to keep students learning when inclement weather prevents them from coming to school, to open new course possibilities to them through distance and online learning, building the capacity of our staff to use technology to develop online courses that will serve students in an e-school setting, and developing healthier lifestyles and individualized entrepreneur skills through the Farm-

to-school initiative and our ongoing status through Alliance for a Healthier Generation, and opening doors for career/technical education and job shadowing and mentorship.

1. During the past 3 years, Owsley County Schools has participated in the Snow-Bound Pilot Project. This program was an innovative learning program in which instruction was delivered to the home during times of inclement weather. This system allowed the students of Owsley County to continue their education without the interruptions that occur during times of inclement weather. Student data was collected, and it was determined that significant learning was taking place at the home.

2. While working on this project, Owsley County High School began to explore the ability to expand its curriculum via distance learning by partnering with neighboring school districts. These partnerships have allowed students to enroll and participate in classes across district lines between Owsley, Madison, and Lee County Schools. Real time classes were taught serving students in two separate locations via distance technologies.

3. Also, through Promise Neighborhood, Owsley County is working with Jackson and Clay County to develop 7 core content courses to be delivered via Blackboard for the 2013-14 school year with the goal of having a complete curriculum available online by 2015-16 school year.

4. Owsley County High School has developed an exemplary applied agriculture program called Farm to Table that engages students in growing, cultivating and marketing produce, giving them first-hand experience in agriculture and business development. The program has been recognized throughout the region, garnering media attention for the level of student engagement and emphasis on entrepreneurship. In 2010, Owsley County High School was recognized as a "Bronze" school from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation sponsored by the William Clinton Foundation. The school is currently working toward the "Gold" level. The recognition shows an ability of the school to adapt its curriculum and educational program to meet the strict standards of the Alliance for a Healthier Generations.

5. Owsley County School District is currently working on a grant partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission. If awarded, this program will introduce and carry out career and job shadowing, mentoring, and training.

6. Owsley County has developed and enrolled 14 students in its own virtual high school.

Component 6
Data and Accountability

6A. Gives *in-depth* explanation for how innovation plan will improve student learning required by the accountability system

The Owsley County innovative plan will improve the number of students that are graduating High School and increase the number of students that graduate college or career ready. As a poor rural district, many of our students have significant barriers to learning. With a student population at 91% qualifying as free or reduced lunch, a vast majority of our students have already been labeled as "at-risk". It is our job to over-come these barriers. We do this by creating the following system that individualizes student learning;

1. Identify each student's needs, wants and barriers.
2. Create an educational model that works for that student utilizing the "whatever it takes" mantra. By doing this, we will be able to significantly reduce High School drop-outs.
3. Provide and expose students to a world that they did not think was possible.
4. Give them opportunities for success in an environment that is friendly and meets their needs.

  By doing this, students will achieve at higher percentages. We expect to reduce our drop-out rate to 0%. We expect to raise the % of students meeting college or career readiness standards to a minimum of 75%. Also, **in 2008, only 3.28% of individuals had a college degree in Owsley county** (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). By allowing Owsley County Schools to expand to include students beyond grade 12, more students in Owsley County will have an opportunity to earn advanced degrees.   The opportunity for students of Owsley County to earn 2 or 3 years of college before leaving high school (tuition free) would give students a tremendous head start on gaining college degrees.   If we are granted innovative status and waivers are approved, we expect that within 5 years as many as 50% of our student population would be in line for post-secondary degrees and certifications.

6B. Gives *in-depth* explanation for how innovation plan will improve student learning NOT required by accountability system

We believe that our new innovative approach and focus on individual student learning will have a greater impact on students that is not measured by the accountability model. Opportunity: Again, the three options or pathways will provide opportunities for all students to learn and to be fully engaged in the learning process. As mentioned previously, meeting standards doesn't equate with standardization. All students will address the KCAS through rigorous coursework and applied studies, in and out of formal classroom instruction. Owsley County's commitment is to broadening horizons and opening the larger world to students. John Dewey once said that" education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." So the

opportunities to learn afforded by project-based, hybrid, and applied learning will have students learning by doing and experiencing. Less emphasis on textbooks and more interaction with primary sources and on line resources, authentic work products that develop student creativity and sense of invention, internships and field studies, and flexible use of time, space and teacher expertise all increase opportunities for students to learn in ways that promote achievement and college and career readiness. The district's innovative use of technology for online courses and its exemplary Farm to Table program promoting agriculture and business entrepreneurship help set the stage for further innovation in learning as presented in this proposal.

Due to the size and geographical location, Owsley County students do not have the same opportunity that students in larger and more affluent districts have. The traditional number of course offered at OCHS was small, usually consisting of core courses and a few electives. Students interested in many diverse fields never had an opportunity to complete coursework in those areas. A course such as chemistry, which is a staple in most schools, was not offered in Owsley County for years. This plan would break down all of these barriers. Technology allows our students every opportunity if a system is developed to take advantage of what is out there. Our plan allows for this to happen, exposes our students to every opportunity and works to reduce barriers.

6C. Student learning and performance will be *comprehensively* measured by multiple sources of evidence/data

As with many schools in the state of Kentucky, Owsley County already utilizes various assessments to monitor student growth in achievement. The district employs NWEA MAP testing K-12, automaticity testing, fluency, Success For All Comprehension, teacher generated learning checks, A+, Study Island, as well as others. Our district utilizes multiple sources to monitor student learning. Our district also uses KYC3R to monitor student progress toward career readiness goals. – Also, our district tests 7th grade students in Explore to identify areas of needed growth. The district also tests (free of charge) any high school student grades 9-12 who wants to take the ACT exam. This gives students multiple attempts to attain college readiness scores as well as assist the district to refine the specific needs of each student. What separates Owsley from other districts is the extensive research being developed from data generated by Owsley County's innovative programs. Owsley County has partnered with the Appalachia Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) to study the multi-case impact of Dual-Enrollment/Dual Credit programs. This data will be collected to assist in the review of the Owsley County dual credit and model and its impact. Also, one doctoral study was just completed on the effectiveness of Owsley County snow-bound pilot program, and two other doctoral studies are being completed outlining the districts innovative approaches to learning. These extensive research projects comprehensively show that the data collected at OCHS will be utilized to measure the effective of all innovative strategies.

Owsley County will develop a tiered approach to monitor the success of the innovative learning model. Each tier will examine the effectiveness of the program focusing on the individual needs of each student. Each level is as follows:

- o Personalized Education Plan committees – These committees will include student, parent, teacher, advisor and administrators. They will be charged with creating and monitoring individual education plans. These committees will meet quarterly to review data and examine progress of students. They will adjust educational plans based on student's performance/needs.
- o School level leadership – OCHS principal will develop teams to monitor the make-up and status of each education committee. The leadership group will examine school-wide data (MAP testing, EPAS, EOC, KOSSA testing and student performance on project-based learning) to determine success/areas of improvement. It is expected that the number of students meeting college/career benchmarks will improve by 10% per year.
- o District level Team – District personnel will monitor progress to ensure fidelity of the program and ensure that data supports growth. Also, district level teams will create and administer student and parent surveys to monitor strengths and weaknesses of the program.
- o Outside partnerships – Through partnership with Promise Neighborhood and CTL, outside teams will be used to monitor the program. Professional development will be created to enhance the program. They will also assist in monitoring student and teacher progress, and advising district on how to continue to grow the innovative model.
- o State level monitoring—Owsley County hopes that KDE will take an active role in monitoring and assisting in the continuing development of the innovative model. KDE could also assist the district in finding additional partners to expand course offerings and student opportunities.

6D. Uses *detailed* comparison or trend data to evaluate student learning and improve student learning

Owsley County began adopting principals of it innovative programming in the 2012-13 school year. In one year, the high school had significant growth (as shown below) and was one of the top 10% in overall schools growth. Owsley County CCR percentages have improved from 7% of students meeting benchmarks three years ago to 50% last year. Our 2013-14 senior class has already surpassed that number with more than a semester remaining.   This data shows that the innovative approaches adopted by the district have had a positive impact. We believe that by expanding the program, we can exponentially improve student learning in the future.

Accountability Performance					
Level	Year	Overall Score	Percentile in KY	Classification[1]	Rewards and Assistance Category[2]
Owsley County High School	2012-2013	59.7	75	Proficient/Progressing	High Progress School
	2011-2012	49.6	23	Needs Improvement	

6E. *Excellent* assessment system, aligned with learning expectations, will yield reliable, valid and timely information

Owsley County uses of variety of assessments to ensure student progress is taking place at all levels. This begins in elementary school where student are assessed using NWEA MAP testing, SFA comprehension testing, SNAP, AVMR, fluency and automaticity math. This provides data to track students from Kindergarten through 12th grade. In the seventh grade, the Explore test is given to all students. The data is used to help identify student gaps in college readiness indicators, but also to start creating pathway for students as they enter into high schools. Explore data in 8th grade along with Plan data in 10th continues this ongoing monitoring. Furthermore, students in OCHS are given the opportunity to take the ACT a minimum of two times (free of charge) before their 11th grade required test.

Data Source	Rationale for selection of data source	How the data source will be used in relation to proposed plan	How the data source will be reviewed over 5 years to gauge implementation success
College/Career Readiness (College Ready: Fulfillment of KY ACT benchmark scores in English, Mathematics, and Reading; Career Ready: Workeys/ASVAB benchmark score plus KOSSA or industry certificate)	Our plan focuses on increasing the number of students who are College/career Ready.	Data will be used to track the number of students who become college/career ready. We expect a growth of 10% per year.	Data will be tracked with the expected impact of significant growth in college/career readiness (10% increase per year)

Plan/ACT	Monitor student progress toward college readiness	Data will be collected to determine personalized education plans for each student.	Data will be used to show overall growth of the model, but also to show how test data is used to modify student plans to best meet their individual needs.
Cohort Graduation Rate	Improve Cohort Graduation Rate to 100%	Monitor student progress and ensure that personalized education plans are developed that remove barriers that prevent students from completing school. Student graduation rates will increase	In 5 years, all students will meet Co-hort graduation requirement.
Parent/student surveys	Student voice will be used to determine program success and areas of growth.	Parent/student surveys will be collected to ensure that the plan is meeting needs of students and removing all barriers.	After five years, students will be graduating college/career ready in 4 years. Parents and Students surveys will convey an overall satisfaction with the innovative model.

6F. Support systems show extensive use of student data/results and allow for extensive continuous measuring

Again, the tenets of the innovative model are an individualized approach to student learning.   In the development of each personalized education plan, student data, including but not limited to, MAP, Explore, Plan, ACT, WorKeys, ASVAB, student transcript, ILP interest inventories, and anecdotal records will be utilized in order to develop a comprehensive learning plan for each student. The student, teachers, parents, and school administrators will meet to develop the personalized education plan. Meetings will be held frequently to assess student progress.   Students who are enrolled in a complete virtual environment will be required to meet monthly in order to ensure that students are meeting targets. Each month new goals will be set. This intensive monitoring is designed to make sure students are making adequate progress. Students who are not on a fully virtual model will also meet frequently. All students enrolled in the innovative model will meet with teacher mentors and school officials on a semester basis. Each plan will be monitored intensively as outlined above.

Component 7
Resources

7A. *Detailed* and *focused* description of how human, fiscal, and physical resources will be utilized by the innovation plan

The Owsley County School district is allocating significant human and fiscal resources to the implementation for the innovation plan.

Human:

Human resources include the work of both building level principals and district and school level staff. All teachers currently utilize technology resources to create online learning assignments for the snowbound project. Teachers and administrators alike complete professional development and trainings that revolve around innovative learning, blended learning, and integration of differentiated instruction. The virtual school planning committee is made up of administrators, the principal, the guidance counselor, the parents, and the students involved. Significant time and man-hours have been dedicated to the implementation of innovative strategies thus far in the district, and the commitment to continue these measures is evidenced by the 26-0 staff vote in favor of this application previously described.

Teachers and staff will continue to utilize professional learning communities to analyze data to further student learning and to promote its use in the personalized education plans. Teachers will be a part of the planning committees as well as co-creators of any online coursework required of students.

Fiscal:

Fiscal resources include a variety of online and innovative learning tools that have been provided by the district. Licenses for Study Island, A+ Learning, Carnegie Learning, IXL, and a variety of other learning materials have been purchased by the district and are currently utilized for the virtual school, snowbound project, and blended learning initiatives in place throughout the district. District funds also provide extended school services to help provide support for students throughout the learning process. The district has also secured community fiscal support through a scholarship from the local telephone cooperative.

Through partnerships with Promise Neighborhood (PN), Owsley County School was able to obtain Blackboard K-12 Learning.   This significant expense included enough licenses to enroll all students grades K-12 in Blackboard Learning and provide a series of professional development sessions for teachers at both Owsley County Elementary School and Owsley County High School. Teachers were provided with multiple sessions throughout the school year and a weeklong training during the summer focused on the development of full courses on Blackboard. Blackboard

opens the door for an entire online curriculum and is the centerpiece for our whole innovative learning model. With students being having the opportunity to take online courses, the traditional 8 AM – 3 PM school day is not a necessity for students.

The district also utilizes the state purchased Microsoft 365 to use LYNC. Through PN, 30 tablet computers have been purchased so students will have access to distance learning classes at home, an initiative that will be piloted in the 2013-14 SY. Teachers and staff at OCHS will also be asked to teach online courses. The initial course developments will be for teachers that have volunteered to pilot the program. Additional staff will be added in years two - five. District Administrative staff is also directly involved as two of the distance learning courses are being piloted by the district Supervisor of Instruction and the Chief Academic Officer.

The district and schools have committed to a continuation of the services currently in place for students. The waivers requested in this application will further enable us to provide additional and more meaningful services for students.

Physical:

Physical resources provided by the district include access to the building, access to classroom materials (textbooks, workbooks, library materials, etc.), and access to technology resources. Owsley County High School is currently 1:1 in terms of technology devices, and Owsley County Elementary School is nearly 1:1. OCHS contains three full computer labs as well as an innovative learning lab for student use. Owsley County Elementary has two computer labs and a tutoring center. All classrooms have Promethean boards, projectors, and teacher and student workstations. An I-Pad cart is available for checkout from the OCHS library.

The high school has desktop computers available for student use at home so that hardware does not stand in the way of learning. A virtual high school is up and running and 14 students are enrolled. This virtual school is just one example of what has been made possible by the willingness of the district to promote the utilization of human, fiscal, and physical resources to this project.

7B. Plan *clearly* describes how district personnel will be utilized effectively to advance innovation efforts

Due to significant loss of state and federal funding, Owsley County School district struggles to meet the basic course offerings for its student population. Staffing levels are stretched thin, and there are limited or no resources to offer varied elective courses. The innovative learning model will give students and administration significant flexibility and numerous additional course offerings. Roles of teachers will change. Teachers will still have traditional classes, but many will be expected to offer online courses using Blackboard, or distance courses using LYNC. The expectation that everyone is a part of this innovation is evidenced by the fact that both schools voted in support of this innovation plan and several of those teachers are already currently involved in course development for our virtual school. Teachers are a part of the course planning teams for the grade level virtual school curricula. Teachers may be compensated extra (stipend or extra service) for additional duties. Others may supplement

work load of a traditional course for an online or distance learning course. Teachers may also have options of teaching early bird or evening courses to meet their contractual requirements to the district. On line and distance learning courses will also allow districts to share courses and faculty across district lines, as evidenced by the sharing of multiple dual credit courses and a mythology course across district lines during the 2012-2013 school year.

7C. If appropriate, plan *clearly and specifically* establishes a process to assign professional and support staff based on student learning needs and outcomes

As the program evolves, professional and support staff can be assigned to meet the individual learning and educational needs of our student body. In addition to the traditional data driven and RTI models, Owsley County will also assign staff as required by the personalized educational plan needs of its students. These services may include providing tutors for students during daytime and after school extended school services programs, providing specially designed instruction teachers to ensure that all learning needs are met, and providing technology and other logistical assistance as necessary. Each student will have regular "checkpoint" meetings to ensure that progress is being made and that student learning goals are met. Student performance and activity will be monitored by school personnel in the periods between these meetings. At any point during a student's tenure in any aspect of our innovation model, the student and/or parent may request support from professional and support staff using the contact information provided at the planning meeting and also contained within the guidelines for the virtual school program. District and school level staff may also suggest additional support based on the results of the monitoring system in place. We believe that we currently have in place the personnel to ensure that our innovation plan is successful and to ensure that the goals of the waiver requests are met. Should additional needs arise, staff members have expressed their support of the project and can be redirected to fulfill any required duties.

7D. Thorough **discussion of how budgetary planning and sufficient resources are employed to ensure effective implementation of innovation plan**
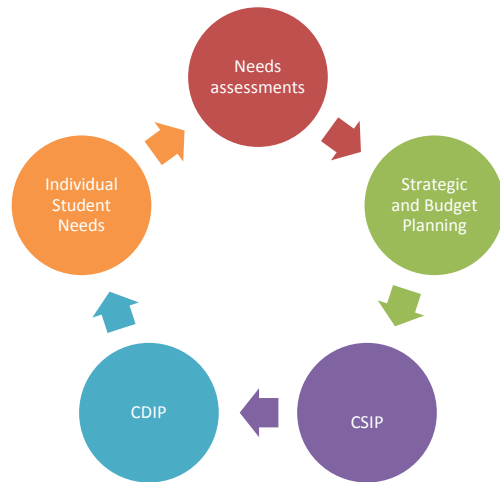
The district will need to consider annually, and perhaps even as frequently as quarterly, the allocation and assignment of technology, staffing, programming, and scheduling. This process will begin with a needs assessment so that the needs of both the students and the district can be considered. Once those needs are identified, the strategic planning and budget planning piece can be put into place. These plans will be reflected in the CDIP and CSIP. Members of the planning team will include both district and school level staff to ensure that all available resources are considered and to ensure that resources are being utilized effectively to provide for student success.

Using past stimulus funds, the district invested in Promethean boards, projectors, and teacher workstations in every classroom. We have since added iPad carts, a laptop cart, and a Mondopad to this inventory. These technologies provide us with the means to fulfill the goals of our innovation plan. For example, the iPad carts are currently utilized by the middle school language arts teacher and the high school geometry teacher to individualize learning and to create a more engaging environment for students.

7E. Plan *fully* establishes a process for providing facilities, services, or equipment/technology for successful implementation of innovation plan

The following is a list of human, fiscal, and physical resources that are readily available for use to ensure successful implementation of the plan. These resources will be utilized for to meet the goals of the innovation plan based on the needs of the students, schools and district as determined by the planning committees before, during, and after the planning meetings. These resources will be utilized per existing school and district policies and procedures to support student learning.

Faculty
Staff qualified to teach multiple content areas shared between districts
Staff qualified to teach college level courses shared between districts and with colleges and universities
District administrative staff who teach part of the day
Staff shared between grade levels

Facilities
A pre K – 6 building – site for early high school courses
A 7 – 12 building – the site of origin of cross district classes, satellite campus for various universities and colleges
Free standing technology center
Free standing Adult Education building
A greenhouse
School farm
Barn
Processing and preserving facility in the works
Family Life Center Lease

BlackBoard Learning
K-12 licenses
Training for staff and students
Additional training for a leader group
Partnership with Promise Neighborhood
Distance learning resource
Virtual high school resource

	Blended learning resource
	Black Board app for phones and iPads
LYNC	
	Training
	Usage through Microsoft office 365 for all staff and students
	Distance learning resource
	Lync app for phones
Busses Equipped with wi fi	
	Two wi fi equipped busses
	Will allow students on trips, traveling to sporting events, etc. to complete class work and homework
	Part of 24/7 learning
Office 365	
	e-mail, storage cloud, LYNC
100 iPads	
	library cart of 30
	middle school English cart of 30
	high school math cart of 30
	library tray of 10
	checkout for students
	apps
Netbooks	
	Cart of 24
	Checkout for students

PenTab Computers	
30	
Also a set of 20, 30 for grades 7 8 and 9 purchased through Berea Promise Neighborhood	
Checkout for students	
Computer labs	
Three labs of 26 iMacs	
On site, online, and blended learning opportunities	
Promethean Interactive Boards with Logitech camera and microphone in each classroom	
allows distance learning via Lync in which teacher and students can see and hear each other	
12 sets of Promethean response systems and 6 slates	
MondoPad	
allows distance learning via Lync in which teacher and students can see and hear each other	
Subscription services	
TumbleBookCloud, 24/7 access via the internet to 702 titles, including 110 audio books, 387 e-books, 14 graphic novels and 119 videos. This collection contains a vast array of YA/Teen novels, classics, poetry, short stories, YA/Teen audiobooks , popular graphic novels, and world class educational videos from National Geographic. By uniquely melding the worlds of books and technology, TumbleBookCloud offers a HUGE array of books at a WIDE variety of levels and topics that easily align with the requirements of the Core Curriculum	
Follett Shelf , 24/7 access to 235 titles via the high school library site Can be downloaded to computer, ipad, ipod, iphone, kindle, e readers, etc.	
Follett Destiny, 24/7 access to varying resources via both the elementary and high school library site	
Websites,	
Onesearch ,	
WebPath Express,	
Standards Search,	
Study Island both elementary and high school, standards aligned content for virtual courses, blended learning, etc.	
OCES - Accelerated Reader, IXL Math, Sumdog Math, Reading Eggs, Carnegie Math, MAP Assessment, SFA Team Alpha	

OCMS and OCHS - Carnegie Math, MAP Assessment	
JING software (free)	
Allows teachers to record and then post to blackboard courses 5 minute or less instructional or explanatory videos that can then be posted to BlackBoard courses	
Celly (free)	
Teachers have ability to send "safe" text communications to student groups	
School-to-Work and WIA programs	
Co ops, work experience, technical experience	
Area Vo tech center	
Partnerships with various entities	
Promise Neighborhood	
Local Businesses for example PRTC, Bank, Farm Bureau	
Community for example public library, 4H	
PRTC Internet Voucher Program	
internet voucher for months of January and February to customers in good standing who do not have internet	
Equipment Loan/check out forms	
District developed loan/check out forms for equipment such as ipads, laptops, etc.	
Budgetary Planning	
Needs Assessment,	
CSIP approved by SBDM Councils,	
CDIP approved by Board of Education,	
Strategic Plan	

Component 8
Outcomes for Learning

8A. Focused **and** *thorough* **description of how the innovation plan will lead to greater improvement in student learning**

As stated earlier, Owsley County School system is a very poor rural district. Limited resources, student opportunity, and exposure create an environment in which student motivation often is lacking.   Traditionally, Owsley County Students have had to leave in order to develop skills necessary to becoming college and career ready. Limited course offerings have stifled student interest. Using technology and the ability to partner with other schools, Owsley County hopes to open the world of student learning. The use of technology does not have to be limited to just school hours; the 24/7 learning approach will give the students the opportunity to learn anytime anywhere.

- Microsoft 365 will allow students to join distance learning classes from their homes.
- Blackboard classes will be available to students who cannot attend school during the traditional 8-3 window.
- The plan will also allow students to substitute work experience and job-related learning in the place of traditional courses.
- Competency based credits will allow students to "test out" of classes or receive credit for performance based competencies.

District of Innovation Status will allow the District to make these changes and will also support new structures for schooling detailed in the first section of this application. For the District to achieve dramatically improved outcomes, it cannot do business as usual. Instead, innovation, challenge and inventiveness need to characterize all aspects of secondary schooling no matter what the setting, and Innovation status can assure that the District realizes this vision. With the implementation of the above, student learning will improve drastically. Students have to have met college benchmarks, which makes them college ready. Why shouldn't we treat them as colleges would, as independent learners, with varied schedules and with a student-centric approach? When students see that programs are useful to them, they will excel. Take a nineteen year old high school senior. She was on the brink of dropping out of high school during her senior year because she felt too old to be in school. With the help of our virtual school program, not only did she remain in school, but she is taking college classes, utilizing Blackboard and the district's Study Island and A+ programs to complete her graduation requirements. She had already met college-ready benchmarks and was ready for the next step. Without the virtual school program, she would not have finished high school. Her learning is improved because she can learn in her comfort zone and without feeling self-conscious, while still being challenged with rigorous coursework.

8B. Exceptionally **reflects a commitment to equity and** *exceptionally* **demonstrates an appreciation for diversity, particularly for special populations**

The basis of Owsley County's plan is to expand the role of personalized learning and breaking down barriers to all student success. **Every** student, especially those with significant barriers to learning, will have a personalized educational plan (PEP) that will be specific to the individual needs of that student. Plans will be developed to meet the pedagogical and curriculum needs and no barrier will be allowed to stand in the way. The foundation will begin in elementary grades with the ILP process along with K-PREP and MAP data being utilized to create individual student pathways. Beginning in the 7th and 8th grades, every student at Owsley County High School will work with teacher advisors, counselors, parents and administrators to develop a PEP. Each plan will be specific to the needs of each student. Students will utilize ILP interest inventories, test data and teacher recommendations to help form education plan and establish the educational goals. Students and parents will be required to have specific input on their own educational goals and pathway. Once a plan has been established, the team will create an option or pathway for the student to follow in order to meet his/her needs, as outlined in the mission and vision section of this proposal, under the three pathways. Each educational pathway will be monitored and evaluated for each student regularly by teacher, counselor, administrators and the individual student, since self-regulation and self-assessment are key skills for college readiness. If a student is not making adequate progress, his/her plan will be modified to meet individual needs. Formative assessments such as MAP, as well as teacher grades, work experience and other evaluations will be utilized to monitor progress. Each student must show growth and measurable attainment goals will be set for all three pathways which reflect achievement on state assessments and EPAS for EXPLORE and ACT tests. Since 91% of our students are considered to be part of a "special population" (free/reduced lunch), the focus of our whole school is to commit to diversity. Owsley County students are at a disadvantage when it comes to experiences and job opportunities locally. We will diligently work to expose those students to the college and work world so that they can see what is available to them.

The purpose of education is to create successful, prepared, and contributing members of society that are not reliant on government assistance. For us to promote this ideal, we must change drastically to keep our students focused on this goal by any means necessary. The demographics of our county reveal the large reliance on government assistance that our population exhibits; if we want our students to achieve more than the generation before them, then we must show them another way. We must show them that college or career is a real option for them. Our current virtual school students are a sampling of our most diverse students, with males and females both represented as well as free/reduced lunch students, students with behavioral issues, and students with medical issues that prevent them from being successful in the regular school setting. The key similarity with all of these students is that they all have the ability to be successful, and they are proving the truth of that sentiment with their current performance in the virtual school. These students would have dropped out of school had it not been for the personalized education plan developed for them.

8C. *Systematically* addresses educational opportunities for all students

Owsley's Innovative Model will develop personalized education plans (PEP) for each student. The plans will be specific and meet the individual needs of each student. In order for us to maximize the potential of each student we MUST move away from the one-size fits all approach. We must challenge the tenets of the traditional educational norms such as; 8am-3pm school, an August to May school year, and a common curriculum that EVERY student is supposed to master. Instead, we must develop an educational model that meets the specific needs of each student, breaking down these barriers and challenging traditional curriculum and pedagogical approaches. Our plan uses a student's strength to build a plan that will help them be successful in life. It may mean that the student be placed in an accelerated track going far beyond the requirements of the Common Core, but it also means that we may have to waive certain requirements (Algebra 2 or Eng. 4) for more practical coursework that meets the needs of a student with more academic challenges.

Owsley County is committed to its students and ensures that each student will receive a rigorous education that prepares them for life as a productive citizen.   This may mean a schedule that is loaded with accelerated or dual-credit courses. It also means that a rigorous education with a vocational focus, and an emphasis being placed on job and real life skills be more appropriate for some students. In this model a student may not need an algebra 2 or biology class.   They may need a math class more focused on business and financial principles, or a physical science course. The school continues to strive to find ways to educate students by any necessary means, breaking down barriers, and providing the students their best opportunities for a successful life. For example, an OCHS junior student's career plan is to become an electrician. His desire is to meet his college/career ready benchmarks and attend our local technology center all day during his senior year. If he does so, he will complete the electrician program, and possibly the carpentry program as well. His goal is to become a lineman for the electrical companies. Why should we, as educators, prevent this? If he meets the benchmarks required by the state, why shouldn't he be permitted to delve deeper into his career choice as a senior and to receive as much training as possible to prepare him for his future? Another student is a senior who wants to join the military. He is a student who struggles academically and thusly did not perform well on his initial ASVAB assessment. His recruiter told him that he had to improve his score if he wished to join the military. As a senior, his primary educational focus should be in improving this score and a curriculum should be designed especially for him to help him achieve this goal. A third example is a senior student who has met her college benchmarks and has set a personal goal to obtain her associate's degree by the time she graduates from high school. The school has helped her as much as rules and regulations allow, but District of Innovation status would make it easier for the school to assist her in the fulfillment of this goal.

8D. Plan provides a *focused* description of non-traditional learning opportunities

To examine how the plan works, one can look at the three types of learning environments that were created for specific students. One model is for the traditional student. This is a student who works well in the traditional agrarian/industrial model. The student attends school each day from 8:00 AM -3 PM and is enrolled in seven classes. The classes may be chosen to meet the specific needs of an individual student, but can otherwise vary little from the traditional educational platform. Model two is an online model in which students may be enrolled in a completely virtual school setting. The student's course-work is designed to meet their individual needs. Finally, a hybrid model that includes both elements of the traditional model and that of the virtual model. In this model, students attend school for a portion of the day. During that time, they take traditional courses. The rest of the day the student may be enrolled in online courses, project based learning courses, at-work co-ops, or competency based courses. These students may attend class on the school campus only the time enrolled in courses at school. The rest of the time they may complete course work off-site.

 Traditional Model. The vast majority of students still fall into this category. An example of this is a sophomore at OCHS. The student is a high functioning student and has already met all ACT benchmarks. The student is very interested in computers and technology. After meeting with a mentor, the students schedule was planned as follows:

 1st Period… Biology 1 (End of Course assessment administered)

 2nd Period… Alg. 2 (End of Course assessment administered)

 3rd Period… Math Lab (Hawkes College Algebra)

 4th Period… English 2 (End of Course assessment administered)

 5th Period… Hybrid Course. Student is completing IC3 certification (competency credit). Also, student is enrolled in Introduction to Python programming offered through coursera.com.

 6th Period… Band

 7th Period… US History/History 108/109 Dual Credit course offered through a partnership with HCTC (End of Course assessment administered)

 While the student's schedule is a traditional seven period approach, the schedule has been modified to meet the specific needs of the student. It includes a performance based course, a MOOC course (Python programming), an independent study (Hawkes College Alg) and a dual credit course. Several students are currently enrolled with modified schedules to meet their needs, including students on college readiness pathways, but also those on career readiness paths.

Virtual Model. Currently 14 students in the Owsley County School District are enrolled in a completely virtual format. These students range from students taking complete online college course loads to students taking all career pathway courses. One student is a senior in high school who was offered a job with Elliot construction.   The student has not met college readiness benchmarks, but is close to completing a career pathway. The student has been enrolled in the KY3CR online learning program. The program is designed to assist students in reaching college/career readiness benchmarks.   The student's schedule is performance based requiring them to complete tasks assigned within a certain amount of time. The goal is for the student to complete the program and be prepared to meet WorkKeys benchmarks and KOSSA certifications by the end of the first semester. The student will be awarded core requirement credits in reading and math upon successful completion. The student's other credits will be awarded based on work experiences. This student, who was prepared to drop out of school, is now on track to graduate in May.

Hybrid approach. This is a popular approach among our driving student population. Many of our students are well on track to graduate and complete a college or career pathway. We encourage students that are on pace for completion to look at expanding their experiences through our dual-credit program, online classes, work co-ops or competency based credit courses. An example of this is a junior student who is enrolled in Algebra II, English III and Spanish during the morning. In the afternoon, the student leaves campus, but is enrolled in two online college courses and is working part-time. We are able to award three performance-based credits for the courses taken off campus.

These examples highlight ways we are currently using innovative approaches to meet the needs of students, however, this is just the tip of the iceberg in the approaches needed to truly impact all students of Owsley County Schools. We are requesting, through this application, permission from the Kentucky Department of Education to exponentially expand our approaches in meeting the needs of students and breaking down all barriers to learning.   We hope to expand our innovative approach each year until all students are being served. We are requesting numerous waivers and assistance for KDE to help us on our journey. Owsley County is small rural county that does not have access many things offered in larger districts. The school is also aware that the limited exposure and opportunities provided to our students is a tremendous issue. We hope through this status, and the assistance of KDE, Owsley County can become a model for the state, and possibly even the nation.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

- Describe the activities/processes the district plans to utilize to communicate the innovation plan to each of the following groups: students, parents and families, staff and faculty, feeder schools, school board members, teachers, teacher organizations/associations, community-based organizations, local philanthropy, and other education partners.
- Describe what has been completed to date to communicate the innovation plan to all stakeholders.

Owsley County is a small rural community, which is served by one high school and one elementary.   While size is often a disadvantage for the people of Owsley County, in this instance it can be looked upon as strength. The advantage that a small community has is that everyone knows everyone else which makes dissemination of information easier to reach all stakeholders.   The district uses its webpage, one-call now system, Blackboard, Twitter, message centers (digital signs at each school), e-mail, local newspaper and word of mouth to get information out.   The plan for innovation was presented to the Owsley County Board of Education on the August 13, 2013 board meeting. Board members enthusiastically endorsed the plan. All teachers in the district have been involved in the snow-bound pilot for the past 3 years.   During PLC's staff has been engaged in conversation regarding the innovative initiative and are ready to begin the expansion of our already numerous innovative programs. The district has already communicated its plan to most stakeholders and many have endorsed the model as evidenced by the support letters accompanying the application.

Once the district has been approved for the program, several steps will take place in order to communicate the plan to all stakeholders. First, an orientation meeting will be scheduled to meet with all students and parents that are available for participation in the model. The orientation will outline the individual student educational plan process and the options students have. Parents and students will then schedule times to meet with advisors to develop educational plans. Brochures will be developed and disseminated explaining the new initiatives. Individual letters, school webpage, message center and one-call now systems will be utilized to get information out to all stakeholders about meeting dates, planning sessions and scheduling. The district will also work with local media outlets to promote the new innovative programs.

Conclusion

In 2010, Owsley County High School was one of the lowest performing schools in the state in regards to the percentage of students graduating who met college/career readiness benchmarks. That year, only seven percent of seniors who graduated were considered college ready. ("College/career readiness map," 2010) By 2013, OCHS had a graduation rate of 98% with 50% of graduating seniors meeting college/career readiness goals. Also, the overall accountability numbers have drastically improved. Since the implementation of the innovative model, Owsley County High School has moved from the 23rd percentile rank among high schools in the state to the 75th percentile. Owsley County High School is now considered a proficient school and also is in the top 10% of schools in the state for overall growth. ("Owsley county high," 2013).   We ask that the committee grant Owsley County School District Innovative Status and work with the district to approve all waivers. The model relieves tremendous financial burden from parents by allowing students to gain a large percentage of their post-secondary education free of charge.   The goal of the district is to create a model that could lead to all students in the state having the opportunity to remove barriers to learning and to guide them to meet their full potential.

Appendix

http://www.owsley.kyschools.us/Page/587

http://www.ruraledu.org/print_article.php?id=2799

http://www.kentuckyteacher.org/features/2012/02/students-continue-learning-even-when-schools-are-out/

 ACE Leadership High School (http://aceleadership.org/)

http://ksba.org/Downloads/11%20May%20Advocate.pdf

USC Hybrid High School: Imagine http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUVY3wcy0HM

http://www.wolfe.k12.ky.us/districtNewsArticle.aspx?artID=906

Project Based Learning at High Tech High (http://youtu.be/xfP53Alnbhk)

http://www.ksba.org/protected/PrintArticle.aspx?iid=50UY3B&dasi=3UBI

http://www.lrc.ky.gov/minutes%5CStudentTechnology/121127OK.HTM

http://www.connectkentucky.org/NR/rdonlyres/CE91A6D8-E433-47D1-8923-19B867D51AFA/0/1_OWSLEYCOUNTYSTRATEGICTECHNOLOGYPLAN.pdf

http://homegrownkentucky.wix.com/home